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DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION
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Civil society
Facilitating activism at eye-level in a sense of solidarity

Solar power
Involving the public in planning boosts popular acceptance

Journalism
Institutional aspects limit media's ability to report objectively

Artistic Expression

Title: An installation by Ai Weiwei that tackles the Chinese artist's prison experience
Photo: Rain/EPA/picture-alliance

Focus: Artistic expression

Visualised messages

Latin America is well known for spectacular wall paintings called murales. Artists use them to convey controversial messages to masses of people. Currently, marginalised young people mostly resort to graffiti to make themselves noticed, writes **Sebastián Vargas,** a journalist from Argentina. In South Sudan, making films now means risking one's life, as **Ochan Hannington,** who lives in exile, states. Page 16, 19

New self-confidence

For a long time, arts were assessed from a European perspective. Lately, however, things have begun to change. African perspectives are increasingly considered to be valid, and African artists are appreciated much more accordingly. **Yvette Mutumba** of Frankfurt's Museum of World Cultures discussed matters in an interview. Page 21

Raising awareness for refugee issues

Hermann Josef Hack, a German happenings artist, has organised an art project in Lebanese refugee camps. He uses the artifacts to get attention for refugee issues, journalist **Martina Sabra** reports. Page 24

Different roles

Since 2009, a cultural centre in the La Paz agglomeration has been staging plays. The actors are marginalised indigenous youth. **Jorge Cruz Quispe,** who heads the centre, told Sheila Mysorekar about his approach in an interview. Page 26

Provocation is okay, but not criticism

It was a major setback for China's first comparatively free generation of artists when the pro-democracy movement was crushed in 1989. Today, a spirit of liberty prevails in artists' workshops in China, German journalist **Florian Arnold** has noted, but criticism of the government cannot be displayed in public. Page 29

Foreign exposure

Mai Nguyen Thi Thanh is an artist from Vietnam who is currently living in Berlin. She elaborates how a previous stay in Cambodia inspired her work. One of her main interests is the topic of identity. **Roland Diry** of the Frankfurt-based Ensemble Modern told D+C of a recent project with Indonesian composers. In both cases, funding from the KfW Stiftung facilitated international exchange. Page 32, 36

Editorial

A human right

"For the first time since escaping to Lebanon, I feel that someone sees us as human beings, who not only require food and shelter, but also have cultural needs." Martina Sabra (p. 24 f.) quotes a Syrian refugee saying this sentence. This woman excellently spelled out the relevance of artistic expression.

The arts are an essential aspect of being human, they offer vitally important mental sustenance. In their various forms, the arts inspire, and they offer consolation. They allow people to express their emotions, thoughts and ideas. Human beings have always made pictures, sung, danced and staged performances. The freedom of the arts is a human right that results from every individual's freedom of expression.

Where the arts and cultural activities are suppressed – as unfortunately is the case in many countries run by authoritarian governments – the development of entire societies suffers. Repression results in climates of fear and frustration, and typically, business activism and scholars' research suffer as well.

Many artists, however, do not allow censorship and persecution to keep them from stating their views. Artists have many ways to express criticism in subtle rather than explicit ways. Many are adept at hiding messages in seemingly innocuous contexts. Other artists, however, confront tyranny head on, risking their lives and physical integrity.

The arts serve to raise public awareness of injustices, and they can lend voices to those who would otherwise not have any. In many Latin American countries, for example, large paintings on the walls of buildings depict the lives of poor, indigenous communities in ways that illiterate people understand. In a similar sense, the Picha-Art-Center from the Democratic Republic of the Congo uses composite photographs to tackle the hardships faced by workers in the country's erstwhile copper mines.

To those who are forced to live in circumstances of hopelessness, the arts can provide some support. Creativity, imagination and fantasy help people to cope with their fates. Making pictures or playing music generates positive emotions and personal energy. When disadvantaged youngsters perform a drama on stage, they experience themselves in new roles, so they no longer simply belong to "the difficult generation". Their self confidence grows, and they discover a new outlook on things.

It helps refugees, moreover, to overcome trauma when they deal with their painful experiences in paintings that they draw on large sheets of tarpaulin. By checking whether any given country allows the arts and cultural expression to thrive in liberty or not, we can learn a lot about what life is like there.

The arts are almost always closely tied to freedom, and freedom is a prerequisite for good lives. This is something policymakers in Germany, a country with a bleak history of Nazi as well as Communist dictatorships, understand quite well. And that is one reason why some German state-funded agencies use a share of their resources to support foreign artists who live abroad, even inviting some to spend a certain time in Germany in order to focus on the creation of new works as well as to perform or exhibit those works here in the host country. In some developing countries, some artists' livelihoods actually depend on this kind of support.

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Tribune

Welsing / Engagement Global

Promoting human rights

D+C/E+Z is published on behalf of Engagement Global, a government agency that supports civil-society activism. In our interview, **Jens Kreuter,** the chief executive, elaborates why state funding for non-governmental organisations makes sense and what NGOs are better at than state agencies. Page 39

Media under pressure

The media are supposed to serve a watchdog role. However, interest groups and state agencies often put pressure on them, for example in Bangladesh. **Rozina Islam,** a journalist who won an anti-corruption prize, reports. Page 44

Debate

picture-alliance/dpa

On the brink

Burkina Faso's transitional government is back in office after a military coup failed. **Karim Okanla,** a university lecturer from Benin, sees recent events as an example of democratic change still being difficult in Africa. Page 47

Leave no one behind

Economists' views diverge on whether economic transformation must always go along with rising inequality or whether poverty reduction is best achieved when governments try to stop social divides from widening. There is consensus, however, that governments must facilitate primary education for all to promote pro-poor growth.

Monitor

The worst economic scenario, according to Manuel Hinds, a former finance minister of El Salvador, is when business power and political power becomes one. This, he says, happens in financial crises, when governments decide they must bail out private-sector banks. In such a setting banks always win. If they make a profit, they keep the gains, and if they make losses, they can force others to bear the brunt.

dem

Attending school helps children from poor families escape poverty: footwear seen in a Nairobi classroom.

Hinds says that, in his time at the World Bank, his job included telling governments in developing countries to avoid that kind of scenario. He finds it "scary" this has been happening in the USA and EU in the course of the global financial crisis. Those who control liquidity, he argues, must not control policy making as well, for otherwise the public interest will suffer.

However, Hinds does not consider inequality a major concern. New technologies, he points out, normally mean that some successful entrepreneurs become extraordinarily rich and influential. What matters more, however, is that, as the economy modernises and grows, masses of people eventually become better off. Hinds sees China as an example of spectacular growth not being shared equally, but nonetheless reducing poverty at great speed.

Income inequality, in this view, results from progress, and the crucial issue is that society as a whole benefits from progress. Whether some benefit much more than others, is not essential, Hinds argues. Less fortunate people, he adds, should be protected by some kind of safety net. Everybody should have access to health care, and all children must get basic education. At the same, he insists that the education of a highly-qualified elite is also necessary for development to happen.

Stephan Klasen of the University of Goettingen sees things in a different light. According to him, inequality can block modernisation and economic growth. That is the case when powerful elites ensure that they alone benefit from progress (also note article page 9).

Klasen points out that countries such as South Korea or Taiwan witnessed an economic transformation that raised income levels in general, without inequality increasing dramatically. He says that such a development path is more likely in places where assets such as land, savings, educational achievements are more equally distributed than in places with very unequal distribution. Assets, after all, allow people to grasp opportunities.

Klasen too considers China a good example. He points out that poverty reduction was most effective in the early years of the post-Mao liberalisation when livelihoods improved in rural areas in particular. In the past two decades, however, given that some Chinese people had already accumulated considerably more assets than others, growth has been leading to ever more pronounced inequality, while the impact on poverty has declined.

Klasen is in favour of redistributive policies that reduce inequality. Taxation, social-protection systems and education programmes serve that purpose. Klasen considers primary education particularly important, but says that secondary and tertiary education matter in the development process as well. In more general terms, he is in favour of governments building infrastructure, promoting human-capital formation, developing rural areas and ensuring the provision of health services. Policies of this kind allow many people to participate in economic growth.

In the experience of Georg Schäfer, who works for GIZ, inequality can "block economic transformation completely". In Berlin in October, he told the annual conference of the Poverty Reduction, Equity and Growth Network (PEGNet) that, especially in least-developed countries, masses

of people tend to be excluded from markets as well as political decision making. PEGNet links academic research institutes to policymakers and implementing agencies. The conference topic this year was pro-poor growth (see essay in D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2015/08, page 32). According to Schäfer, inequality often hampers efficient resource allocation, social mobility, social cohesion and even political stability.

Schäfer warns that inequality probably hurts expanding economies to a larger extent than generally assumed. He says that so far the emphasis in international discourse has been: "Don't hamper growth." But as policymakers will have to tackle inequality sooner or later, another issue seems just as relevant to him: "Don't wait too long."

Augustin Fosu of the University of Ghana emphasises that there are different kinds of inequality. Unequal incomes, according to him, are not as problematic as unequal access to education and health care. If these sectors are left to market forces, he argues, income inequality will result in unequal access to vital services and, ultimately, the exclusion of the poor. Government action, including official development assistance, can make the difference.

Economists use the Gini coefficient to measure inequality. At the global level, it has been going down in recent years. Fosu welcomes this trend, but adds that it is somewhat theoretical. His point is that people do not assess their own fate according to global averages. What matters in social and political terms is inequality at the national level, which is what people experience. For most nations, the Gini coefficient has lately been rising. Accordingly, tackling inequality is moving up on the political agenda in many countries.

Given the severe budget constraints that low-income countries face, Fosu says that primary education should be a top priority. Governments should spend money to spread literacy and numeracy. At the same time, they should ensure there are opportunities for secondary and tertiary education, but those opportunities can be provided by the private sector. Generous subsidies for higher education, Fosu warns, are likely to result in brain drain. "You educate them, they leave," he says. The opposite is true of primary education: "You educate them, they stay."

Hans Dembowski

Link:
PEGNet
http://www.pegnet.ifw-kiel.de/

Our spring edition

Our April focus section will tackle "digital development"

The decision is clear. For five weeks, our users were invited to choose between two topics, and the majority opted for digital development. We find the topic exciting and would like to thank all participants for casting their votes.

Keith Ivey/FlickR

The vote was not close, as 69 % of our readers opted for digital development. Only 31 % expressed themselves in favour of a focus section on military matters.

We will now begin to work on the focus section. It will deal with a fast changing world. The internet and other digital developments have already had a huge impact on how we live. Information and communication technology is changing everything from schools to farming and, yes, military matters too.

Whether people have access to digital technology is a crucial issue. Opportunities tend to be fewer the poorer a region is. On the other hand, experts now expect poorer regions to leapfrog some steps in digital development – especially the dependence on fixed-line networks – so they can catch up faster and sometimes even overtake advanced nations.

We are looking forward to producing this focus section and hope we will be able to fulfil your expectations. Should you have proposals concerning the topic or even want to contribute an essay yourself, please get in touch: euz.editor@fs-medien.de

D+C/ E+Z

Better than camps

According to the UN refugee agency UNHCR, the best response to an influx of refugees is often to include them in every-day life. If they find jobs and earn money, they even boost the economies of host countries.

Eight months after his arrival in Berlin, Jihad, a Syrian student, is looking for a job. He speaks good English, his German is improving, and he has experience: the aspiring journalist worked for five years with the UN, helping distribute food in Yarmouk Camp in Damascus.

Before being brutalised in the current civil war, Yarmouk, a decades-old refugee camp, had become a thriving urban sprawl of 100,000 Palestinians. It had its own schools, hospitals and businesses. After heavy fighting between government forces, rebel groups and the ISIS militia, its population has now dwindled to 20,000. In Germany, Jihad has a place at the university and a work permit, but it is hard to get hired and earn money.

According to the UN, there were 19.5 million refugees all over the world in 2014. Today, four of ten refugees live in camps, but the UN is looking for alternatives as some 42,000 people leave their homes every day. Paul Spiegel of the UNHCR says that, unless a host country is very poor, integration in society should be a win-win situation for all sides.

Refugee camps have usually been bad for refugees and bad for their host countries, he adds. Once camps have sprung up, they are hard to eliminate and their inhabitants usually depend on outside aid. And even comparatively successful camps such as Yarmouk was, remain separated and marginalised. Avoiding such gaps requires the willingness of the local population to involve the newly arrived in mainstream society.

"Many people think of refugees as needy and dependent, but this is not true," Spiegel told a meeting at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin in October. "They are very resourceful, but they are not always given what they need to be productive." The UNHCR is working with economists and development agencies to gather data and draft innovative plans. Ideas include formalising informal work, ensuring access to financial services as well as national healthcare systems and welfare benefits.

Understanding refugees' skills is a starting point. Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey have so far taken in the greatest numbers of Syrian refugees. But as those numbers have increased, they need new ways to manage the crisis. "The refugees are becoming poorer and poorer over time," Spiegel says. Two thirds of those in Jordan now live below that country's poverty line. It would make sense to make use of Syrians' artisanal and professional skills, but that is hardly possible in camps.

Financial support is another issue. Cash transfers are now seen as a better alternative to providing food and other goods in kind. Refugees buy food and provisions locally, "so there is a multiplier effect for the local economy," Spiegel says. "They choose what they can buy instead of us deciding, which gives them more dignity."

It is especially important, Spiegel says, to include refugees in national healthcare and education systems. Creating parallel services is much more expensive. This is all the more so, as many refugees have complex health problems that require expensive treatment. Insurance schemes are needed therefore.

Iran, Spiegel notes, has been one of the most generous countries in the world to refugees, accepting hundreds of thousands of people from Afghanistan. They are now being integrated into the Iranian healthcare system. UNHCR, the Iranian government and the refugees themselves will pay the premiums, Spiegel says.

A big question is how to accomplish things without overburdening the resources of the host country. The UNHCR expert knows the answer: "If refugees are able to work, they can help the system and the better the system can be."

In Berlin, Jihad, the Syrian student, says that being treated like any other normal person would help him most. Overcoming bias is a problem however, both in terms of government policies and in personal interaction with fellow citizens. In Germany, even his name is a hurdle because it is frequently associated with radicalism and terror. However, the word "jihad" does not have this loaded meaning in Arabic. "Where I come from, Christian and Muslim parents alike give this name to their children – it means to make a great effort for something worthwhile." *Ellen Thalman*

Jutrczenka/picture-alliance/dpa

Refugee camps do not offer adequate prospects: Zataari in Jordan is near the Syrian border.

van Zuydam/picture-alliance/AP Photo

Campaign poster.

No surprise

Incumbent Alassane Ouattara has won the presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire with about 84 % of the vote. His strongest opponent Pascal Affi N'Guessan only got 9 %.

73-year-old Ouattara was the clear front-runner right from the start. According to the independent election commission (CEI) voter turnout was about 60 %. That was more than expected, but less than last time. Some 6,3 million citizens were entitled to vote. Large parts of the opposition, however, had urgend voters to boycott the election.

After the previous presidential election five years ago, the West African country had been hit by the worst wave of violence since independence from France. At the time, Ouattara's predecessor Laurent Gbagbo refused to accept defeat. Some 3,000 people were killed in the conflict, and hundreds of thousands were driven from their homes. Thanks to support from rebel militias and the French military, Ouattara eventually took office. Gbagbo will be tried by the International Criminal Court in the Hague.

Ouattara is a former officer of the International Monetary Fund. His track record in office is good. Since 2011, his country has recorded growth rates of nine percent. Critics point out, however, that such good numbers result from the reconstruction of infrastructure that was destroyed in the conflict in 2010/11. The country has largely been at peace during his term, but society remains deeply divided. Ouattara is from the predominantly Muslim north. Southerners tend to feel marginalised by his government.

According to the opposition, Ouattara is protecting a partisan judiciary. It is known that rebels who belong to the Forces Républicaines, which supported him in the post-election violence five years ago, violated human rights. None of them have been taken to account. So far, the judges have only sentenced Gbagbo supporters. (jj)

Downsides of cyber-politics

As mobile technology expands rapidly in Africa, people are becoming better informed and internationally connected. Censorship is harder to enforce. But it is still an open question whether Information and Communications Technology (ICT) can really promote governmental accountability.

Facebook page of the political movement Balai Citoyen (civic broom) in Burkina Faso.

The Arab spring of 2011 seemed to be the first uprising relying on new ICT. As an Egyptian activist put it, "We use Facebook to schedule our protests, Twitter to coordinate and YouTube to tell the world."

However, communication specialists like journalist Malcolm Gladwell warn against a "techno-euphoria". New ICT, and social media in particular, are often hailed as an effective way of putting the people in charge. In some respects, this is true: citizens can comment on political proceedings, get information about corruption and exercise rights as citizens. But how effective is all this really?

A recent collection of essays that was published by the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF), which is close to Germany's green party, puts things into context. "Technology is there to facilitate and support processes. It cannot solve any problem on its own," writes Adi Eyal of Code for South Africa, a non-profit organisation.

Statistics show that 26 % of the African population used the internet by the end of 2014. It is estimated that 50 % will be online by 2025. Mobile telephony is accessible almost everywhere.

Quick and effortless communication has an impact on civic engagement and democratic participation. Politicians understand the importance of ICT and social media. In 2011, Goodluck Jonathan, then Nigerian president, announced on Facebook he would run again. The snag is that not everybody has access to social media.

Jochen Luckscheiter and Keren Ben-Zeev, the editors of the HBF publication, admit that ICT can be useful, but that "it is a challenge" to ensure that it does not reinforce "the digital divide (and the associated power differential) between, for example, urban and rural folks or between the genders."

Digital technologies have certainly contributed to a dramatic shift that has "empowered individuals and non-state actors on an unprecedented scale," according to communication expert Sarah Chiumbu. She sees "greater opportunities for political participation and engagement" than traditional mass media provide. Civil-society activists benefit greatly from easy ways to connect and share information. ICT can help urban middle class to sidestep political control in contexts of repression, Chiumbu maintains, but adds that poor and rural communities without broadband access become even more excluded from politics. Accordingly, Chiumbu states that increased ICT use in sub-Saharan Africa "cannot automatically be interpreted as a sign of deepening democracy and accountability".

For activists, there are risks too. Only few people are aware of cyber-security issues. When registering a SIM-card, every user has to provide his personal data, which can then be misused. A similar point is made by Jennifer Radloff from the Association for Progressive Communications' Women's Rights Programme (APC WRP). She writes that activists can benefit from better and cheap communication, but also warns against a rise of sexual abuse online: "If the real world is sexist, it is very likely that most of the technology that develops will have the virus of sexism in its core as well. Online and tech-related violence is part of the continuum of gender-based violence. There is no separation between online and offline violence."

Achille Mbembe, professor in history and politics at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg says the internet is "afropolitan". He predicts that Africa will leapfrog the kind of technological evolution other continents have undergone, "because the philosophy of those new digital technologies is more or less exactly the same as ancient African philosophies. This archive of permanent transformation, mutation, conversion and circulation is an essential dimension of what we can call African culture." *Sheila Mysorekar*

Link:

#Game Changer: How is new media changing political participation in Africa.
https://ke.boell.org/sites/default/files/uploads/2015/07/perspectives_july_2015.pdf

Managing globalisation

François Bourguignon has good and bad news in his small new book. On the upside, the prosperity gap between nations is becoming smaller; on the downside, inequality within nations is rising. Bourguignon's conclusion is that globalisation offers developing countries new opportunities, but governments must tackle social challenges. He is in favour of both national and international action.

Bourguignon is a former chief economist of the World Bank. His academic reputation is based on the research he did on the causes and impacts of poverty. Bourguignon refutes the notion promoted by orthodox economists that redistribution of incomes and wealth thwarts the efficiency of markets. He concedes that this is true of economic models that assume perfect markets. In reality, however, markets are not perfect. Relevant examples include capital markets, education and real estate:

- Those who inherit huge fortunes can invest their own money, and they have easy access to credit. Accordingly, children of rich parents find it easier to start businesses than equally or even more talented children of poor parents.
- This divergence of opportunities is compounded by educational advantages, as rich people can afford to pay high tuition fees.
- For speculative reasons, rich households own rural land and housing real-estate that they don't use much, whereas less prosperous people would be sure to make the most of those resources.

Such examples show that, in strictly economic terms, real-world markets are not as efficient as economic models state. Bourguignon also points out that inequality has serious social and political implications and harms a nation's welfare, for instance by sparking crime, violence and political unrest. He states that in Bogotá at one time about 10 % of the labour force was employed in security services, which are not a very productive sector. To ensure that economies are not restrained unnecessarily, the French scholar therefore wants governments to reduce inequality.

Bourguignon indicates several ways for doing so: the governments of emerging markets should devise social protection systems, and the governments of established economic powers should not reduce such systems. The scholar appreciates public education and health-care systems and calls for adequate taxation. He insists that emerging markets and developing countries must raise adequate government revenue to run public services. At the same time he sees the OECD nations at risk of a race to the bottom concerning taxes.

To avoid such destructive competition, international coordination of tax policies is essential, the former director of the Paris School of Economics writes. He welcomes growing international interest in the matter, but leaves no doubt about current efforts still being inadequate. Inheritance taxes, which today are very difficult to impose in view of the cross-border mobility of both capital and persons, would be a good way of preventing inequality increasing over generations, he argues.

Bourguignon sees need for stronger international policies in other fields as well. For instance, he is adamant that rich nations must spend more on official development assistance (ODA) than the 0.35 % of GNI they afford on average today. In contrast, he points out that France redistributes about 15 % to 20 % of the incomes of its rich people to improve the lot of its disadvantaged people. The professor emeritus also wants advanced countries to give less advantaged countries market access. Intellectual property rights and restrictive immigration rules, he adds, also block opportunities that people from poorer world regions deserve.

All summed up, Bourguignon expresses optimism that globalisation will lead to more broad-based prosperity internationally, but warns that economies and global markets must be regulated properly to that end. He also mentions risks that could undermine positive developments. One of these risks is global warming. Other risks include another global financial crisis, which, in his eyes, might result from the breaking up of Europe's monetary union, for instance. *Hans Dembowski*

dem

Asian economies have been catching up, but domestic disparities persist: on the outskirts of Ho Chi Minh City.

Reference:

François Bourguignon, 2015: The globalisation of inequality. Princeton: University Press.

Why cheap is expensive

A T-shirt for two euros, a kilogramme of meat for three euros or a microwave oven for 15 euros – consumer goods that cost as little as this are actually quite expensive, says Michael Carolan, a sociologist from the USA. His book "Cheaponomics" assesses the true environmental and social costs.

The discount supermarkets and department stores of advanced nations are full of cheap food, clothing, electronic goods, toys and other goods. Buyers purchase them lawfully, argues Carolan, but they do not pay the true price. Cheap goods, he points out, are produced at the expense of people who live in poor countries, earn only very low wages and risk their health working in inappropriately managed factories or mines. In countries with fragile statehood such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, moreover, terrorist militias are involved in the fight over natural resources such as Coltan, which is used in mobile-phone production. Carolan adds that the production of cheap consumer goods tends to be environmentally harmful.

According to Carolan, the marketing of cheap goods does not even serve rich nations. One reason is that these goods make the low-wage sector grow since people will accept lower wages as prices drop. In Carolan's eyes, society as a whole is paying the price. Low-income groups, after all, are supported with governmental welfare payments or housing subsidies which are funded with tax-payer money.

The scholar states that consumers in rich nations know about the true costs, but they do not really ponder the issue and certainly don't change their behavior accordingly. Big corporations are the ones who profit most, the professor at Colorado State University argues. They neither pay workers appropriately, nor do they protect the environment. Such cost avoidance is destructive, Carolan states, and it is symptomatic of a global economic system that channels profits to small sections of society while making broad majorities bear the costs. Carolan calls this "cheaponomics".

Holmes / Lineair

Consumer waste is polluting seas and coasts, for example in Japan.

His book solidly assesses the hidden costs for a number of goods and industries. It also indicates solutions. First of all, Carolan wants us to move on from the conventional wisdom. In his eyes, for example, economic activity is not necessarily linked to permanent economic growth. He also insists that criticism of market failure is not the same as demanding more government intervention.

Carolan's book includes several important messages that people should take to heart.

- The prices of cheap goods and services are illusionary because the real costs are born by other people today and in the future.
- Even consumers do not really benefit from cheap goods because these goods do not last long and need to be replaced soon.
- Factoring in the true costs raises prices in the short run, but does not increase long-term expenditure because sustainability matters too.
- Higher prices do not necessarily imply that people can afford less. The real challenge is to balance consumption, work and leisure intelligently.
- Cheaponomics results from a distorted idea of markets and neglect for relevant impacts of business activity.

The author calls for public debate of these issues and proposes tangible action. In his view, social and political problems need to be tackled, whilst markets as such are not the core problem. The sociologist demands more transparency and democracy, for instance in regard to the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund. He is also in favour of passing and enforcing anti-trust legislation to stabilise prices and put better checks on private-sector companies. He would appreciate higher taxes on the wealthy as well as insolvency rules to protect private and governmental debtors from ruinous interest rates.

Sabine Balk

Reference:

Carolan, M., 2015: Cheaponomics – The high cost of low prices. New York/Abingdon: Routledge

Nowadays: "Say no to salt"

Political campaigning time is beginning again in Uganda with general elections set to take place next year. In their effort to haul in votes, politicians are spending lots of cash. They travel across the country, promising all sorts of things. Most are men who address male citizens.

Today, 121 of more than 300 members of parliament are women. However, only 11 of them won the seat of a constituency in direct elections competing with male candidates. The other 110 women MPs gained office thanks to affirmative action: every district elects a female MP, and only women can run for this office. Uganda's parliamentary districts are smaller than the districts, and the constituency MPs are closer in touch with the electorate.

In election campaigns, women are quite active, taking part in debates and going from door to door, trying to convince voters. Only very few win a constituency, however, and female MPs do not play a big role in Parliament, even when it comes to decision-making on issues concerning women.

Rita Aciro is the executive director of the Uganda Women's Network (UWONET). She says that party manifestos always promise better lives for women. Parties also pledge to put more women in leadership positions. However, the promises are not kept. Aciro complains: "Women lead the dancing, cook food, serve the drinks, and they spread enthusiasm. But when it comes to taking up political positions, their percentage is very low."

To buy votes, politicians try to bribe women with free gifts like salt. Aciro argues that women have to "say no to salt" and vote freely for the candidate of their choice.

The party in government is the National Resistance Movement. More than a quarter of its elected officials are women. The largest opposition party, the Forum for Democratic Change, only has a share of less than a fifth.

UWONET is now calling for a balance of women and men in all political parties that will participate in the upcoming elections. Aciro insists that "there is a lot of benefit of having women in leadership positions, because as a decision-making woman they can ensure that all women get better services."

She has a point. For instance, the Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA) is pushing for provision of all public services to rural women. UWOPA is the caucus of all women MPs in Uganda. Male MPs can join it if they want to.

UWONET is raising several key demands. The civil-society organisation wants five percent of the health budget to be reserved for women's health. It also wants women's land rights to be protected, and girls to get the same education as boys.

Aciro urges parties to mentor and empower their women members and voters on individual ability and not judging them by their gender.

Links:

Uganda Women's Network (UWONET):
http://uwonet.or.ug

Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA):
http://www.uwopa.or.ug

In our column "Nowadays", D+C/E+Z correspondents write about daily life in developing countries.

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Recent atrocities

The Philippines is a predominantly Catholic country, but its southern island Mindanao is predominantly Muslim. However, several indigenous peoples belong to neither of the two faiths. They are collectively called Lumad and probably constitute the archipelago's most marginalised communities. Their rights are often violated in the context of resource extraction and anti-insurgency operations.

"There are virtually no social services for most Lumad communities", says Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples. For instance, one village she recently visited has no school: "Children have to walk to a village seven kilometres away to get primary education." She adds that most of the families depend on subsistence farming and cannot afford to send older children to nearby towns that offer secondary education. "No one in the community has ever made it to college," Tauli-Corpuz, who belongs to an indigenous community herself, points out.

To address such problems, church groups like the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines and various non-governmental organisations have helped Lumad communities set up schools. One example is the Alternative Learning Center for Livelihood and Agricultural Development (ALCADEV) in the town of Lianga.

As Tauli-Corpuz told the 31st Ecumenical Philippine Conference in Bonn in October, a paramilitary group murdered Emerito Samarca, ALCADEV's executive director, on 1 September 2015. Dionel Campos and Bello Sinzo, two indigenous leaders, were murdered in the same village that day. The atrocities have become known as the "ALCADEV killings". The UN official says she is convinced that the perpetrators are backed by the regular security forces.

ALCADEV was established in 2004 to provide secondary education to indigenous youth in eastern Mindanao. The non-governmental institution was accredited by the Philippine Department of Education and has received awards for its excellent programmes. Like other alternative schools in the region, it helps students and their communities understand their rights and defend their ancestral lands.

Because of various mining projects, land rights are a conflict-prone issue in the region, says Tauli-Corpuz. According to her, the government has decided that these schools must not be allowed to continue because they are teaching the people and turning them "into Communists".

Tauli-Corpuz says that the Philippine government aspires to "clean up the presence of insurgents". Operations, however, affect everybody – the church, non-governmental organisations and even some government officials who are perceived to sympathise with the left-wing rebels. The government has allowed the army to occupy non-governmental schools for Lumad children. It is against this backdrop that murders like the ALCADEV killings occur, Tauli-Corpuz says. According to her, more than 4,000 Lumads have fled from their homes after the ALCADEV killings and now live in tents at an evacuation centre in the provincial capital of Tandag City.

The UN official has gathered accounts of the incident from the victims' relatives. They told her that the murders were committed by people they knew from their own community and that they belonged to a paramilitary group called Magahat Bagani. They used to be insurgents and, after they surrendered, the military recruited them, providing them with arms and salaries, Tauli-Corpuz reports. Members of the Lumad community say they saw government soldiers working with Magahat Bagani members prior to the killings. The Philippine authorities deny any link to the Magahat Bagani. The government has promised to support investigations of the incident.

Meanwhile, several hundred Lumads, peasants and human-rights activists from different parts of Mindanao have gone to Manila in order to demand support for their communities. Among other things, they want regular troops and informal militias to withdraw from their communities and schools.

Emmalyn Liwag Kotte

Sequia/picture-alliance/Pacific Press Agency

Lumad rally in Manila in October.

Last exit

Many Africans risk their lives fleeing to Europe in the hope of escaping their home countries' unsafe environments. In the eyes of Ousmane Diarra, the chairman of the association of deported people of Mali (AME), EU policies on development and economics exacerbate insecurity in Africa.

Diarra was deported from Angola in 1996. Today, he organises people in Mali who were expelled from African countries and Europe. He knows the dramatic impacts deportation has on migrants, because he meets affected people every day. Often, entire families and neighbours pool to enable someone to flee to Europe. Accordingly, the refugees are under enormous pressure to find work and repay their debts. Those who are deported, however, return to their communities traumatised and desperate.

picture-alliance/abaca

A convoy of Malian refugees in Mauretania in 2013.

Ousmane Diarra knows cases of migrants who came home only to be disowned by their families or abandoned by their wives. The reason was that they had failed to bring about prosperity. Sometimes, extended families split in acrimony, when someone's personal failure is blamed on inadequate upbringing.

While refugees and migrants are currently making front-page news, the phenomenon itself is nothing new. EU policies have had a bearing of refugees' fates for many years. When the Cotonou Agreement took force in 2002, one consequence was a wave of mass deportation from Europe, as Diarra recalls. This trade agreement between the EU and the ACP, a group of former colonies of EU countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific, includes a clause on "readmission", according to which ACP governments must take in citizens of their own countries as well as those who travelled through it if they are arrested in another country as illegal aliens. Diarra says that masses of people from West Africa were forced to return home at the time, especially from France and Spain.

To help deported people to re-integrate in society, the EU has established the Centre for Information and Management of Migration (CIGEM) in Mali's capital city, Bamako, in 2008. Many refugee organisations express criticism of this institution however. They say that CIGEM serves to control people's movements and, to the extent possible, prevent migration. Diarra asks: "Who tells us that CIGEM was not set up to report persons who plan to migrate to European authorities and alert Frontex, the EU border-control agency?" CIGEM has so far received funding worth about € 10 million from the EU, Diarra says, and the centre is now being run by Mali's government. The activist claims that a similar centre is established in Niger. The security situation in Mali is still fragile. In early 2012, Mali's military clashed with Islamist forces and Tuareg insurgents.

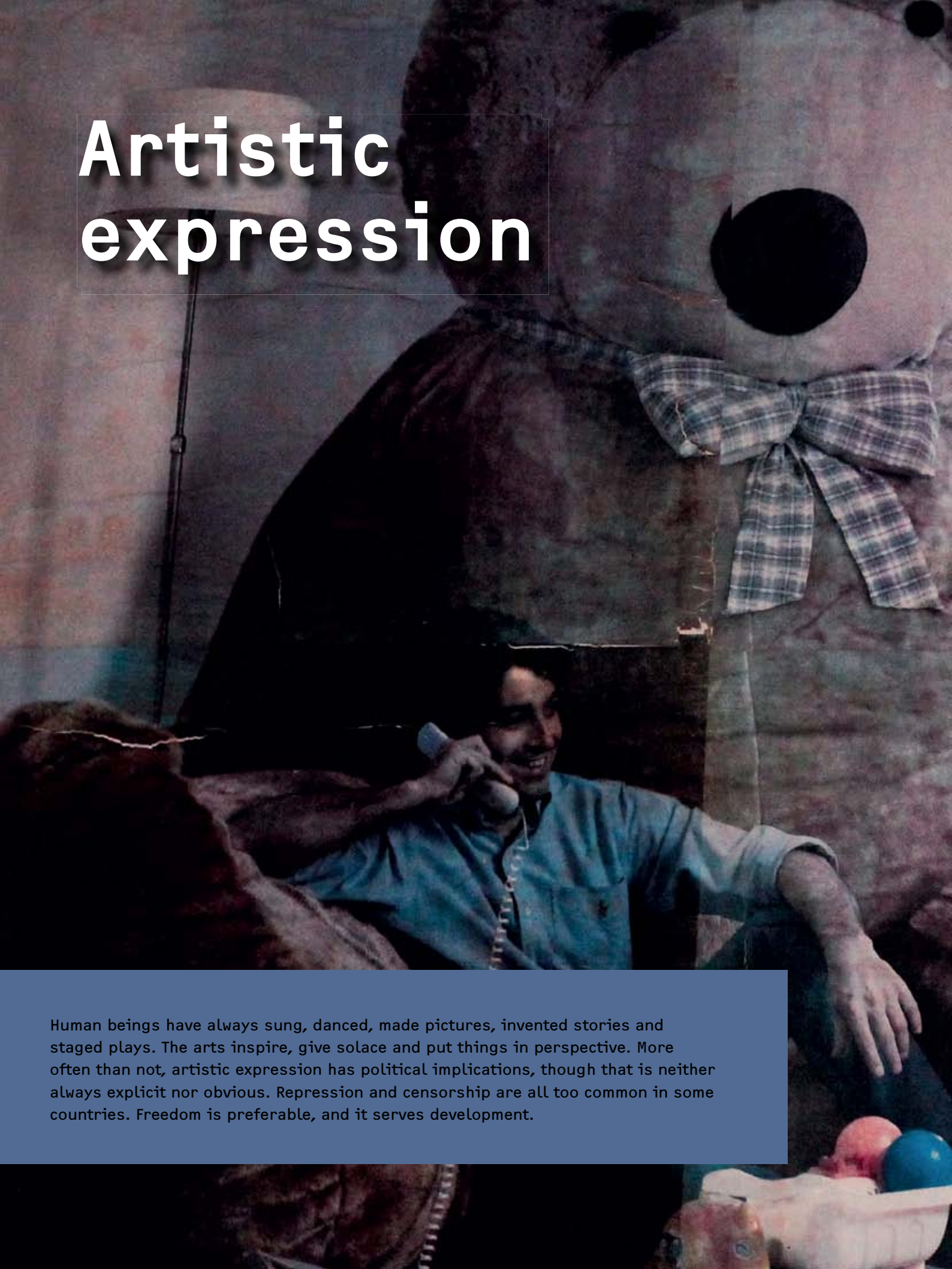
Monitor

Land grabbing is another issue that affects Mali. Because of EU subsidies for bio fuels, for example, vast monocultures are being cultivated on land that used to be used by small-holder farmers and nomads. Part of the problem is western investments in agriculture. Land grabbing concerns many countries, and some experts warn that up to 100 million helpless people may be driven from their traditional lands in the next couple of years (see Michael Windfuhr in D+C/E+Z/05 p.18).

In this context, some civil-society activists want to expose in public the performance of individual companies. Thomas Gebauer, the chief executive of medico international, a humanitarian civil-society organisation based in Germany, disagrees with this approach. He stated at a recent panel discussion in Frankfurt that it is mostly well known who the profiteers are anyway. What is needed, in his eyes, is a non-imperialist lifestyle of solidarity, with a focus on the public good rather than economic growth. According to Gebauer, destructive practices promoted by the EU must be discontinued all over the world. Ousmane Diarra agrees that global approaches are needed: "To find solutions, we must all work together."

Jana Jagalski

Artistic expression



Human beings have always sung, danced, made pictures, invented stories and staged plays. The arts inspire, give solace and put things in perspective. More often than not, artistic expression has political implications, though that is neither always explicit nor obvious. Repression and censorship are all too common in some countries. Freedom is preferable, and it serves development.

Controversy over art project in Argentina: Sofía Jatib created graffiti of hung children on the walls of San Miguel de Tucumán and shocked the town´s inhabitants.

jatib

Seizing public space

In Latin America, artists and activists have found a way to make controversial issues public for all to see – even in restrictive political environments and even for the illiterate. They use street art. Wall paintings called "murales" mark the public space in many parts of Latin America.

By Sebastián Vargas

"In a wall painting, the message is crucial, but it needs to be well painted," says 42-year-old Dardo M., a well-known muralista from Buenos Aires. Street art is intended for public consumption, not for perusal in a gallery or living room. Dardo M. speaks of an artist's attempt to communicate with the observer and put across a specific message. In his eyes, wall paintings are an art form as well as a form of communication.

Since prehistoric times, human beings have painted on walls to convey mythical or ritual messages. The pictures in the Altamira cave in Spain are a striking example. In the first century AD, early Christians painted on walls in catacombs to communicate with one another. Only Christians understood the messages; Roman persecutors could not decipher them. Those wall paintings are the earliest known antecedents of the street art and graffiti we know today, and just as today, they had secret codes and a social function.

Mexican pioneers

In the past century, Diego Rivera, Clemente Orozco and David Siqueiros revived street art in Mexico. In the early 1920s, they founded the Movimiento Muralista Mexicano (the Mexican street art movement) and set out to make art for the people. The movement identified with the Mexican Revolution of 1910, in which intellectuals joined forces with workers and farmers. They sought to revitalise the indigenous culture that had been brutally suppressed since colonial times, and they wanted to create a modern state.

Paola Maurizio, professor of art history in Buenos Aires, says that "the muralists were formally trained artists breaking free from formality". They were inspired by indigenous and folk art as well as by 19th century Italian frescoes. With wall paintings, the Movimiento Muralista Mexicano opened a new channel for public communication. The large-format murals reflected elements of Mexican culture and impressed the largely illiterate rural people, Maurizio says. After centuries of white domination, they finally saw themselves depicted on walls as protagonists of history.

During the Great Depression after 1929, the Movimiento's approach to aesthetics and ideology spread to the USA and beyond. The mural art movement had been confined to Latin America: Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Chile, Bolivia, Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina. But during the devastating economic crisis, which exacerbated social inequality in the USA, its anti-authoritarian approach was increasingly adopted. Later, in the 1960s, leftist students did so in Europe, and street art found its way to the United States again by that circuitous route. In the 1970s, graffiti art, a successor of muralismo, emerged in New York and Philadelphia and then spread around the world.

Art for everyone

Graffiti tend mostly to be text, not images. The inscriptions get their significance from the social context and serve a social function. Walls are not painted just for decoration; graffiti make statements and express protest. 28-year-old graffiti sprayer Santiago Amrein from Buenos Aires claims that anyone who paints on a public building without permission commits a political act by seizing public space. "That's what I like best about street art," he adds. "We are trying to democratise art."

"Street art" is a very broad term and covers diverse forms of expression alongside wall painting and graffiti. Stencil graffiti, which makes text or images easy to reproduce, is increasingly popular, "tags" – stylised signatures – are very widespread, and digital art forms are now emerging, such as video mapping and digital graffiti, which are stored on a tablet, PC or mobile phone and broadcast via social media.

Argentine artist Natalia Rizzo points out that a muralista planning a wall painting needs to take account of the dimensions of the building and the routes of passersby. "Passersby will only stop for a closer look if the work awakens their interest. Otherwise, they just walk past," the 34-year-old says.

In recent years, street art has increasingly become mainstream. Graffiti have been institutionalised by galleries and even "confined" in museums. Major

Sprague/Linair

Wall painting in San Juan la Laguna, Guatemala, depicting the indigenous womens's hard life.

brands and companies use street art techniques and even commission street artists for advertising campaigns. At the same time, there is still a strain of revolutionary political street art that opposes commercialisation. The Bolivian anarcho-feminist artists' collective Mujeres Creando is one example.

Feminist messages

Mujeres Creando have been active for more than 20 years at various levels, engaging in political activism, artistic activity and feminist empowerment. The artists use graffiti as a form of expression, spraying walls and buildings in La Paz with aphorisms such as "Eva is not made from the rib of Evo" or "Pachamama (Earth Mother), you and I both know that abortion has always been around", "Women who unite don't need to put up with violence" or "There can be no decolonisation without depatriarchalisation". In 1993, the collective used graffiti to call for an election boycott in protest over widespread vote-buying ahead of the presidential election.

Mujeres Creando denounce racism and violence at various levels – from state agencies, family and sexual relations through to institutional settings. Their public criticism of patriarchal violence and the abuse of authority has influenced social movements across Bolivia. Mujeres Creando staged a major event at the 31st Biennal de São Paulo in September 2014. The group created an installation called "Space to Abort" at the modern art exhibition, featuring giant uteruses onto which short films were projected.

In São Paulo, a special form of graffiti known as "Pixo" or "Pichação" is found at every turn. The young artists, the pichadores, compete to spray their tags on the city's tallest buildings, in places that they reach by free-climbing or with the support of ropes. Juneca, a 28-year-old ex-pichador, declares: "If it was legal, no one would bother. We are part of the periphery, of the marginalised community, and we say very clearly: I exist, I'm here, and I want you to see me."

This extreme artists' movement is made up largely of very young people, many of them teenagers. It uses

Street art in San Miguel de Tucumán, Argentina.

creative means to represent marginalised sections of the city's people. Jannis Seidaris, a German graphic designer, writes: "Pichação consists of tagging in a distinctive, cryptic style inspired by runic and Gothic script and the logos of many nineties rock bands. Poverty and isolation enabled the style to survive without being influenced by Western graffiti or basic typographical rules." In the past, Pixo was an expression of punk or resistance against military dictatorship; today its motto is "Down with the dictatorship of the mainstream".

Controversial art event

Wall paintings have an influence not just on the art world but, more importantly, on the social environment. The city of San Miguel de Tucumán, the capital of one of the poorest provinces in Argentina with the highest child malnutrition rate in the country, was shocked by an art event in early 2015: a series of stick-on graffiti images of hanged children with four balloons appeared on walls in the city, triggering a public and media debate. The art event was entitled "Felices los niños" (Happy Children) – a reference to a Catholic foundation of the same name, whose director, Padre Julio Grassi, is serving a jail sentence for child abuse.

The art event criticised not only the Catholic Church but also the state, which supports the foundation. It also referred to child labour during the lemon and strawberry harvest in the province. Artist Sofía Jatib, who initiated the event, recalls: "Everyone was shocked by the image. But it is so hypocritical to portray childhood as innocent." She considers that idea an authoritarian dream.

Many of the wall paintings can still be seen in Tucumán today. Despite the negative press, people are open to the artists' message. 55-year-old domestic helper Ana María says: "I don't find the images disturbing. What I find much more disturbing is hearing people say that slum-dwellers should be slain before they grow up. It's a remark I hear often because the children of the poor in this society are worth nothing." Raúl López, a car mechanic in Tucumán, believes that the press may be outraged by the horrific images of the art event but "the politicians in this province don't give a fig when children die."

The great strength of wall painting is that it triggers public debate. And that is precisely the intention. ←

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Links:

Mujeres Creando:
http://www.mujerescreando.org/
http://www.31bienal.org.br/en/post/1318

Risking my life

Ochan Hannington is from South Sudan and makes films. He has been forced to leave his country, where freedom of expression is not protected. He told Sabine Balk of D+C/E+Z about his experience.

By Ochan Hannington

I mainly make documentaries about things that affect everyday lives of people in a certain community. I usually intend to show my audience stories I think they would find interesting and appealing. My audience finds itself identifying with a protagonist, which leaves a strong mark on their mind. The audience is international, and some of my videos are available on Youtube. I consider myself a multimedia journalist and an artist.

I am proud of my work, because my films are good. One video clip is a good example. It is called "Radio Morobo: a welcome community asset". In this case, I did two jobs in one, so to speak. First, the film is a PR item for the GIZ. Second, which is more important, I was part of the team that trained young, but passionate radio broadcasters on behalf of the GIZ. We were helping to establish community radios in South Sudan. I am proud of having kept the balance of journalism and PR. My film "Wani and His Vision" was shown at international cinema festivals. It won me an award in Germany.

Sadly, the conditions of my work have become truly terrible. South Sudan is a harsh environment, where journalism faces censorship. Rule of law can hardly be spoken of, especially since civil strife has flared up again. There is very little respect for media workers.

Normally, I am my own one-man crew. My kind of work is dangerous, and few people are prepared to risk their lives. Moreover, most people would not give their best without being paid a lot of money, more than I could ever afford. So usually I do everything myself.

I use my own video equipment, but I have lost it twice. South Sudanese security agencies took it away – for good. Right now, I lack equipment. It was confiscated a few months in Yei, a town in South Sudan. The national security service has confiscated other property of mine too, including my car, my academic credentials, books and other personal belongings. I have little hope to recover anything.

jatrib

From initial idea to film distribution

WELTFILME.org is a German civil-society association that funds and facilitates film projects in developing countries, supporting production from the initial idea through to distribution and evaluation. The guiding principle is to allow directors from the countries concerned to express their ideas, whether in documentaries or in fictional scenes. WELTFILME.org also takes care of distribution, exposing many people as possible to the films via movie theatres, TV, the Internet, social media and mobile cinemas. This is done both at national and international levels.

WELTFILME.org networks media workers in developing countries, emerging markets and countries in transition from Communist rule. In the long run, WELTFILME.org wants to promote a viable, self-sustaining and internationally networked film industry in as many places as possible.

One project was the short video "Juba Youth", in which five young directors – including Ochan Hannington – dealt with the life of youngsters in South Sudan. The film lets young people express what they hope to achieve and how they want their country to develop. As South Sudan has plunged back into civil war, however, this short film is no longer up-to-date.

Another project was "Ideen.Transfair". Young directors from India, Kenya, Colombia and Togo made short videos in close cooperation with weltwärts-volonteers (see interview with Jens Kreuter, p. 39). The goal was to spread the volunteers ideas internationally in order to inspire others.

WELTFILME.org collects membership fees and raises funds from private donors. The organisation also gets support from Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Links

http://weltfilme.org/en/projects/

personal photo

Ochan Hannington (r.) at work: He does not have his equipment anymore because security agents took it away.

Ochan Hannington is a South Sudanese filmmaker. Sabine Balk wrote down what he told her about his work and life.
euz.editor@fs-medien.de

They are hounding me because I wrote an article on the news website "The Niles" about corruption allegations in a church in Yei. The Niles is funded by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. I believe the reverend who is implicated in the scandal bribed the security agencies to kill me, because I refused to renounce the article. I was arrested and told I would die unless I backtracked, so I knew that bribes were paid. I have published more articles on related matters, and I have been in situations in which it was quite clear that I might not live to see the next day.

The sad truth is that the situation is bad for all media workers in South Sudan. It seems to be deteriorating every day. We are considered security risks. I am in exile and cannot return to my country unless I'm willing to risk my life. I am being followed and don't want to reveal in public where I am staying. I will not give up my work, but I will have to work in other places than my home country in the future.

It is a struggle to get along without my equipment. Life is expensive. I need to earn money. Sometimes, I fund my work with loans, and pay back the money when I got payments from one of the media outlets I contributed to. Many of them are international.

I have got a university degree in arts, media and public relations. But I had practiced filmmaking before the academic achievement. I started out as a sound engineer working for German professional filmmakers way back 2006. I was able to contribute considerably to a number of films. One of them was "School Day with Diana". Since then I have created many films, particularly documentaries about diverse topics.

My aspiration is to keep on presenting stories that create lasting memories by using visual arts. Moreover, I want to coach others who are passionate about the job and willing to learn to do what I do. The idea is not necessarily to make films, but use all kinds of media in a creative way. ←

Links:

Motumba Radio:
http://www.xchange-perspectives.org/index.php/home_leser/items/294.html
Wani and His Vision:
http://weltfilme.org/en/portfolio-item/wani-and-his-vision/
The Niles:
http://www.theniles.org/en

Stepping into the light

The international art scene is dominated by the west and still neglects art from Africa. But change is underway, and African artists are making a mark. Art expert Yvette Mutumba told Sabine Balk what is exciting about contemporary art from Africa and how artists fare in their home countries.

Interview with Yvette Mutumba

What are the differences between contemporary European, African and Asian art?
I don't use the term "African art" because I don't think such a thing exists. The phrase suggests a category that exists outside European art, implying that there is one particular African style. That is not the case. Art from Africa is far too heterogeneous. It comprises a whole range of forms and modes of artistic expression, from painting to sculpture, to digital art. Performance art, installation art and digital art are major facets and they certainly do not fit the widely held stereotypical view of art from Africa. So I prefer to speak of contemporary art from Africa and the diaspora or of art from African perspectives. That says: sure, there are certain shared backgrounds, but not a homogeneity that would define an African style. The only thing that the different scenes in Africa have in common is that many countries in

Weltkulturen Museum

South African artists Daniel Hewson (left) and Sam Nhlengethwa (centre) with curator Yvette Mutumba preparing the exhibition "A Labour of Love", which opens on 2 December at the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt.

Weltkulturen Museum

Senegalese artist El Hadji Sy (left) hosting an art workshop in 2015 in the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt.

Sub-Saharan Africa gained independence from their colonial rulers at around the same time in the 1960s.

What impacts did that have on art?
Many artists tried to redefine themselves and find a new national identity. It happened in lots of countries but the artistic outcomes were extremely diverse. Senegal, for instance, had Léopold Sédar Senghor as president – a man who was a poet himself. He did a lot to promote art and culture, and even spent 30 % of the national budget on it. So developments in Senegal differed considerably from those in Uganda, for example. We speak of African modernisms today – deliberately using the plural to underline that there are different, parallel modern art movements. Some artists at the time consciously chose to focus on tradition, others were inspired by the political turning-point to break new ground.

Despite all the progress made, art from Africa is still not seen as equal to European art. Why is that?
It still stems from the fact that the west has written art history, defining what is and is not art for a very long time. As a result, art from other parts of the world has either gone unnoticed or been considered inferior. Which is why what happened at the Frankfurt Weltkulturen Museum is so special. We started collecting contemporary art from Africa back in the 1970s and made it a core element of the collection in the mid-1980s. That caused an outcry in museum circles. It was incomprehensible. The museums did not regard it as art of equal merit. It was not until 1989 and the so-called "Global Turn" that things slowly started to change. Art history narratives were questioned and ignorance of non European art was criticised. The first major exhibitions of contemporary art from Africa were staged. Then, in the early 2000s, an African curator was appointed for documenta 11 – Nigerian Okwui Enwezor – and major international museums such as the Tate Modern in London started putting art from Africa or Latin America on show. Doing so is still not the norm but the process of overcoming old hierarchies in art has started.

How do African artists see themselves today?
People today can no longer be defined by where they come from. There are artists who were born in Lagos, studied in London and are represented by a gallery in Milan. Those people are often referred to as "Afropolitans". There is a tendency for artists who have travelled a lot or studied and lived elsewhere to return

to their home countries and support or create local institutions. They try to make a difference at home. Artists are questioning established structures. Why are New York, London and Berlin the places where careers are made. Why not Lagos? They also want to be active at home and use the network they have created abroad to establish their own art space with other artists. That is a new phenomenon.

Is art becoming more international?
There has always been an international network but it is obviously a great deal more extensive and easier to use today because of technology. Digital networking has increased and the term "global art" is used in an almost inflationary manner, referring to an inclusive idea of art history. The art scene pays more attention to contemporary art, but that is not to say that there was no art previously. I have a problem with the fact that Africans are sometimes portrayed as newcomers to art simply because they are only now being noticed here. Senegal's El Hadji Sy, who is currently celebrated by a seven and-a-half month retrospective at the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt, was doing workshops with international artists as far back as the 1980s. And there are plenty more examples I could mention.

What influence does a country's development status have on artists and do artists have an effect on a country's development?
There is a causal relationship, of course. It can be seen in South Africa, for instance, which has a strong economic base. But it is not the only factor. Countries like South Africa and Nigeria may enjoy more or greater international attention, but that does not mean that nothing happens in other countries. Art with merit beyond the conventional stereotype of African souvenir arts and crafts is found in many regions. There is money in all countries, and elites that promote art in countries that we don't think of as rich. For a long time, African elites may have had no interest in art, but they are starting to reconsider things. They now realise that investing in art can make good sense.

When is something art, and when is it "merely" arts and crafts?
The items sold as souvenirs at tourist markets are certainly not regarded as contemporary art even by local art lovers. They are arts and crafts. There is a difference, anyway, when it comes to video or performance art. There is no mass production and nothing that can be reproduced. And how much an artist is worth depends on art market dynamics. It also depends on how well artists can market themselves. But that applies everywhere, not just in the African market.

Is art in Africa more political than elsewhere?
Yes, it tended to be more political – especially in the 1960s when authenticity was a big issue. What I also find, though, is that there is a widespread expectation that art from Africa should deal with poverty or AIDS or other such subjects. But art in African countries is just as political or apolitical as in other countries. There are, of course, artists who are political but there are also those who work simply at an aesthetic level – some of them in a deliberate bid to flout expectations.

Can artists contribute to a country's development, do they play a pioneering role?
There are certain artists – even curators – who play an important role in that respect. But not every artist. In South Africa, for instance, there are artists and collectives addressing homophobia, which highlights the issue and can make a difference. And in Lubumbashi in the Congo, the Picha Art Center was set up two years ago to focus on current issues such as the problems presented by former copper mines. They also involve local communities and see art as a participatory medium. They certainly make an important contribution.

Who funds art in Africa?
A lot of money comes from the private sector or from intermediary organisations such as the Goethe Institute or the British Council. Those organisations are still very relevant in local art scenes – and a residual presence of former colonial powers. Some members of Africa's art scene feel ambivalent about this situation. On the one hand, there is a desire for independence; on the other, the money is urgently needed. But there are also a number of young artists who take a very pragmatic view, saying we will gladly take the money, but we will not compromise on content and will not be part of the intermediary system.

How are artists regarded in African countries?
That depends on the country and tradition. In many countries, there was artistic production long before modern art emerged. In the Congo, for example, carvers enjoyed high status in the Luba Kingdom from the 16th to 19th century, much like court painters in Europe.

Where can one study art or train as an artist in Africa?
There are a number of well-established, well-run art schools. But it depends on where you are. South Africa is at international level, Nigeria and Uganda have art schools that have been going since the 1960s. Some scenes, such as photographic art in South Africa, have a formative influence on other artists. In Uganda, the art academy is mainly known for painting. There are also lots of residency programmes that are offered by museums or foundations all over the world, where artists are invited to work and study for a certain length of time. That is a popular option. ←

Yvette Mutumba is also co-founder of "C&", a magazine for contemporary art from African perspectives that is financed by the German Federal Foreign Office.
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http://www.weltkulturenmuseum.de

More than food and shelter

Herman Josef Hack is a German happenings artist and a student of Joseph Beuys. He calls for solidarity with refugees and wants the reasons for displacement – such as war and climate change – to be dealt with. This year, Hack and photographer Andreas Pohl took their "Global Brainstorming Project" to Lebanon in order to work with refugees.

By Martina Sabra

Saida is an hour's drive south of Beirut. It is raining, so the event takes place indoors, in the premises of a local citizens' initiative. The pungent smell of paint is in the air, the windows are wide open. Large sheets of white tarpaulin, a material normally used for truck covers or circus tents, are spread out on the floor.

Together with some participants, Hack is making final preparations. He is mixing weatherproof ink he will fill into dozens of buckets and tins of various sizes. He says: "The pictures will be displayed outdoors, in public places".

In his studio back home in Siegburg near Bonn, Hack uses painted tarpaulins to make miniature or live-size refugee tents. He later sets up those tents in unusual locations – at Frankfurt Airport, in front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin – to spread awareness.

Hack gives some tarpaulins to refugees to strengthen or decorate their simple shelters. The project – initiated by Hack and the photographer and publisher Andreas Pohl – is called Global Brainstorming.

In Saida, Haifa Al Atrash pulls on a blue rubber glove, dips her fingers into a pot and, with practised

Michael Buttler/CARE

Hermann Josef Hack's art project: refugees in Lebanon paint pictures...

Michael Buttler/CARE

... that later go on show in front of Cologne Cathedral.

movements, applies ink to the canvas. The 40-year-old teacher is an experienced painter and sculptor whose life was shaped by displacement.

Her grandparents were expelled from Palestine in 1948 and settled in Syria. A large part of the family has lived for decades in Yarmuk near Damascus. Yarmuk started out as a refugee camp and grew into a city district. In late 2012, Haifa Al Atrash and her husband fled with their three children, escaping before Yarmuk was almost totally destroyed.

The family found a temporary home in Southern Lebanon, but the future is uncertain. As Haifa Al Atrash talks, she uses a large brush to paint the pictures that haunt her every day: the sea, high waves, overcrowded boats, an SOS signal: "A friend of mine drowned with her three children, and so did a very close friend of my husband", she says. Other people that she knows have died in the Libyan desert. "It's very hard to keep losing people you are close to".

The art group in Saida is as diverse as the Middle East itself. It includes Syrians, Palestinians, Lebanese, Muslims and Christians, adults and children. The adults tend to paint traumatic experiences and political motifs. The children's pictures generally show their longings: the lost family, the flowers in the garden and, over and over again, school.

Most of the children from Syria cannot attend school in Lebanon. Jala Al Khatib paints her former classroom. She was nine when her parents left Syria. Now, she is eleven and has missed two years of schooling. "We need school desperately", the bright little girl says. "But we can't go."

Jala has three brothers. Their father Khaled is an electronic engineer, mother Fatima studied law. In Damascus, both parents had good jobs, and the family lived in a comfortable apartment. Now, the six of them live in a converted storeroom and depend on donations and food parcels. Even so – or perhaps for that very reason – the whole family responded immediately to the invitation to take part in the art project.

Fundamental need

On one tarpaulin, Fatima Al Khatib and other women paint a key – the key to the homeland they lost. Fatima says that she regularly went to the theatre and concerts in Damascus. In Lebanon, there is no way she can afford to.

The problems that refugees face are obviously not solved by an art project like Hack's, Fatima points out. But she is grateful for the invitation to the workshop because she thinks the project restores a bit of humanity. "For the first time since escaping to Lebanon, I feel that someone sees us as human beings, who not only require food and shelter, but also have cultural needs".

Link:
http://hermann-josef-hack.de

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Proud parents

Over the last 25 years, El Alto has grown from a suburb of La Paz to a city of a million people, located in the Andes at 4,000 meters above sea level. Most of its residents are indigenous, either Aymará or Quechua. Unemployment is high. Young people have few opportunities of social advancement and higher education. The Centro de Comunicación Cultural Chasquí (C.C.C. Chasquí), a local cultural centre, is providing valuable educational services to children and youth. Its director and co-founder, Jorge Cruz Quispe, discussed his work in an interview with Sheila Mysorekar.

Interview with Jorge Cruz Quispe

What drew you to cultural education?
My own experience of discrimination. I was born in El Alto. The city is home to poor people who have moved here from the countryside and often work in La Paz. My father was a simple labourer, and my mother was illiterate. The knowledge of our people, the Aymará, was considered worthless in Bolivian society at the time. When I was growing up, we indigenous people were not respected. Young people from El Alto had no opportunities. I wanted to change that. In 1988, with the support of others, I founded the C.C.C. Chasquí.

What do you want to achieve?
We want to give children a chance to develop – in particular children with problems who are sent to us by four surrounding schools. The kids must know what their rights are and be enabled to participate in society. Above all, we promote a culture of peace.

Why is that necessary?
El Alto is still a marginalised place. Even though we all campaigned for President Evo Morales and the "cambio" ("change"), the local government does nothing for us. Water and electricity services are unreliable. The people are very poor. Children must work for their families' survival.

Is there violence?
Yes, it is widespread. Conflicts arise for various reasons: poverty and social deprivation matter, and so does the dissolution of families because of labour migration. Rural migration is another issue. Many of El Alto's residents come from remote villages in the Andes. They come to El Alto looking for a better life, which they don't always find. Discrimination of indigenous peoples also plays a role. All of these issues create conflict. Young people are confronted with different forms of violence every day. We want to show them how to resolve conflicts constructively and how to live peacefully with one another.

What do you do?
In C.C.C. Chasquí, we try to promote a culture of peace: we help children develop self-confidence, we work to improve communication between the generations and, most importantly, contribute to a sense of collective community and cooperation through teamwork. Our cultural centre trains children and young people to act as mediators so they help resolve conflicts in their schools. In 2011, with support from the international Christian peace service EIRENE and Germany's Civil Peace Service, we published a manual on our approach to achieving a culture of peace.

How is the C.C.C. Chasquí organised?
In the beginning, C.C.C. Chasquí was self-financed, but now we get support from EIRENE and terres des hommes Germany. We have a 600-square-meter complex, comprising a multi-purpose hall, workshops, an auditorium, a library and a kitchen. We have internet connectivity. We have 16 employees – educators and other staff – as well as volunteers. We take care of around 120 children and young people per day. They participate in three-hour workshops that take place either in the morning or in the afternoon. Some are helped to do their homework. We offer sports programmes and teach leadership skills. Performing arts are important too – we have music, a puppet theatre and stage plays.

How do you stage plays?
We have been offering theatre workshops for young people at C.C.C. Chasquí since 2009. At first, parents were very prejudiced and said: "They won't learn anything; play-acting is for drunk people." But that attitude has changed. As soon as the children get on stage, they find they can make a contribution to something and show who and what they are. And their parents are proud of them. We have discovered that theatre is especially important for children who have problems. It allows them to tackle issues they are familiar with, violence for instance. Over

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C.C.C. Chasquí

The theatre group on tour in Germany.

Jorge Cruz Quispe is the director and co-founder of the Centro de Comunicación Cultural Chasquí. Together with EIRENE and the German Civil Peace Service, which receives support from Germany's federal government through Engagement Global, the centre published a manual on its approach to achieving a culture of peace. *https://cccchasqui.wordpress.com/*

20 young people are involved in the theatre group, seven of whom form part of the permanent team. A few months ago, GIZ invited to us to go on tour in Germany. That was really something special.

To what extent does a youth theatre group have an impact on life in El Alto?

Staging plays teaches young persons to cooperate well with others, and that boosts their self-confidence. The theatre group often uses traditional Aymará stories, providing lessons on indigenous culture and ancestral knowledge. The older people are walking libraries: we learn a lot from them at C.C.C. Chasquí. The children learn that we do not have to be slaves to technology, but rather that we belong to Pachamama, our Mother Earth. In this poor district, 80 % of the people speak Aymará. It is their cultural heritage. Both in the theatre group and at C.C.C. Chasquí in general, we want to teach people the values of "vivir bien".

What does "vivir bien" mean?

Generally speaking, this is the Andean worldview. It is also one of the cornerstones of the Morales government. "Vivir bien" – living well – roughly means peaceful coexistence in harmony with nature and its diversity. The main idea is respect for our Mother Earth and all living things. In practice, it means that we shouldn't pollute or contaminate the earth, for instance. Living collectively is another central principle. The focus isn't so much on the individual, the "me, me, me". The idea is to share things. So if you need something, I will give it to you, without any strings attached. And when I need something someday, you or someone else will give it to me. Reciprocity is vital – but so is diversity. We are not all the same. Just as there are many different kinds of potatoes in the Andes, there are many different kinds of people in the world. Accordingly, our programmes allow people with disabilities to participate. We do not want to make everyone homogeneous. There are 36 different ethnic groups in Bolivia. They practice different religions, which the judicial system approaches as if they were all the same. Here at C.C.C. Chasquí, however, we emphasise Aymará culture.

What problems do you face?

Well, to move forward, we are forced to support the government. Moreover, people from the neighbourhood come to us with their problems. Sometimes I act as a mediator for infighting families.

What are your hopes for the future?

We are trying to educate children thoughtfully and considerately so that they learn to love and respect their fellow people. I would like to apply what we are doing here in C.C.C. Chasquí to the entire city of El Alto. That is my dream. ←

Link:

C.C.C. Chasquí, 2011: Methodología de cultura de paz. *http://www.ziviler-friedensdienst.org/sites/ziviler-friedensdienst.org/files/anhang/publikation/zfd-metodologia-de-cultura-de-paz-1994.pdf*

Provocation is all right; explicit criticism is not

The repression of the democratic movement in 1989 set back the first comparatively free generation of artists in Communist China by years. Disappointment caused many to emigrate. Others remained and developed a style that is known as "Cynical Realism". Nowadays, artists are largely free to create what they want, but art that takes on sensitive issues may not be shown publicly.

By Florian Arnold

In the spring of 1989, China's young artists were on the verge of achieving a breakthrough. For a solid decade, students and academy graduates had been able to experiment and develop, increasingly liberated from Maoist dogma and the strict limitations of an ancient tradition. Painters were inspired by western art and its radical modes of self-expression; they adapted styles ranging from Expressionism to Abstraction to Pop Art.

The idealistic young artists saw themselves as part of a new era, a social revitalisation that was supported by top politicians like Zhao Ziyang, then the party's general-secretary. Academy graduates were permitted to display avant-garde works at an exhibit hall on Tiananmen Square in Beijing, in the epicentre of power.

However, the exhibition was closed in a matter of days, and only a few weeks later, on 4 June 1989, China's political leadership under Deng Xiaoping brutally suppressed the pro-democracy movement. The events of 4 June marked the start of a new ice age for artists. Deep disappointment and disillusionment drove some to emigrate, including Li Di (born in 1963), a participant in the Beijing exhibition, and Wang Cheng Yun (born in 1959), a national prize winner from Chengdu. With very little money or knowledge of German, they decided to study western art at the Braunschweig University of Art.

Other artists remained in China, formed new groups in their studios and developed a style, at first half in secret, that eventually became known as Cynical Realism. Images by the Cynical Realist artist Yue Minjun (born in 1962) have become iconic. They feature identical men painted in garish colours, baring their teeth in exaggerated grins. Their excessive, caricatured jubilation has an unsettling effect: in Yue's hands, the "Land of Smiles" becomes grotesque. His 1995 oil painting "The Execution" shows condemned

Wang Cheng Yun in front of a work from his series "The great consumption".

personal photo

Arnold

Beijing artist Li Di in his studio. After 1989, Li lived and worked in the German city of Braunschweig. In 2010, he returned to China.

men laughing in front of a mock firing squad. In 2007, the painting was sold for the equivalent of almost € 6 million at a London auction, making it the most expensive contemporary work from China to date.

Commercial success

Other Chinese Pop Art artists have also achieved international renown. They include Fang Lijun (born in 1963), whose striking images are populated by bald men, and Zeng Fanzhi, with his jarring series of paintings featuring people in masks. According to the Financial Times, Zeng Fanzhi is currently China's richest painter.

The 1999 Venice Biennale was a landmark in the perception of new art from China. Curator Harald Szeemann made Chinese artists a focal point, sparking interest from around the world. Chinese collectors and investors also took notice – and China is an enormous market. According to estimates, sales on the Chinese art market now amount to over € 11 billion per year.

The most commercially successful Chinese artists fetch just as high of prices as the big names from the west. Many painters, sculptors and video artists make a good or decent living. Li Di and Wang Cheng Yun returned to China from Braunschweig in the 2000s. They live at least as well in China as they did in Germany, and they find China's dynamic and contradictory life more artistically stimulating.

The undisputed centre of the art world is Beijing. Dashanzi 798, a former factory complex, has become a main attraction. Since the mid-1990s, hundreds of artists have established studios there, including China's most famous contemporary artist, Ai Weiwei. What began as an underground project is now a tourist magnet with dozens of galleries, some of which are quite well known. Another large artist colony is the district of Songzhuang, on the eastern edge of the metropolis, where over 2,000 artists live and work.

In their studios and private spaces, artists (and their buyers) enjoy a great deal of freedom. Censorship is common in the context of public exhibitions, however. The vast majority of museums are under state control. They do not display art that expresses criticism concerning sensitive topics. Even in private galleries, objects are occasionally removed for reasons of censorship. Nevertheless, a visitor strolling through the 798 Art Zone would be surprised by the freedom, radical nature and provocative potential of

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many of the works. A considerable number contain more or less hidden commentaries on problems in Chinese society, such as environmental destruction, materialism, the one-child limit and China's dog-eat-dog society. What is rarely found in publicly displayed works, however, is explicit criticism of the party and the state. Artists who voice such criticism as insistently as Ai Weiwei has done run into problems.

Ever since Xi Jinping rose to general-secretary of the Communist Party in 2012 and president in 2013, pressure on civil society has increased, and that affects artists too. At a cultural congress in the spring of 2015, Xi issued a new guideline to artists, filmmakers and architects. He wants their works to present "correct" and patriotic ideas of history and culture. One ministerial department even encouraged artists to spend time "with the rural population in order to think about their world view".

Such statements are an alarming reprisal of Maoist ideas and intimidation tactics, says Walter Smerling, who is the director of the Museum Küppersmühle in Duisburg and initiated China 8, a major exhibition which was shown in eight cities in the Ruhr area this summer. Fan Di'an, the president of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, was on the board of trustees. According to Smerling, the board discussed some works intensively, but ultimately nothing was censored. Unfortunately, Ai Weiwei decided not to participate.

In order to have a career as an artist in China, it helps to study at one of the country's dozen or so renowned academies of art. It is hard to get admitted, as many young people apply to study. The technical instruction the students get is considered excellent. Nevertheless, the focus is still on learning traditional techniques as opposed to developing an individual style of expression, says Wang Cheng Yun. He is trying to strengthen this aspect of the curriculum at the academy in Chengdu.

The young, liberated attitude towards art is called "xinhua". However, there are many artists meeting the continued demand for "guohua", the traditional style of art, but they don't all earn a fortune. Others earn a living in the creative economy, working in film, advertising or as designers. Some drive a taxi, or make portraits of tourists.

After a phase that was influenced by western Pop Art, some of China's ambitious, independent artists have begun to reconsider Chinese art traditions. Huang Min (born in 1975) depicts society's alienation from its roots by painting garishly dressed tourists who stare into traditional ink brush landscapes. Zhang Huan (born in 1965) paints photorealistic black-and-white motifs from the 1960s and 70s that seem frozen in time: subjects include his literature professor, his first love wearing long pigtails or propaganda motifs. Their ephemeral nature is inscribed in their texture: ash on linen.

Clay sculpture from Yao Jun's glorifying Mao series "100 Moments of the Great Man", on display at Tianjin Art Museum in 2013.

Art as a reflection of cosmic harmony

In China, artists have only recently begun to interpret reality from their unique, personal perspectives. For centuries, Chinese painting, which was considered the highest form of art, consisted primarily of ink paintings of a narrow range of motifs, including idealised landscapes with mountain peaks, rivers, flowering branches or pine trees in the mist. Traditional Chinese art is not concerned with depicting reality, much less with serving as a visual expression of a particular personality. Instead, it aspires to reflect an all-encompassing cosmic harmony by providing an approximation of an ideal world. Its finely rendered contours dissolve mystically, taking the viewer along with them.

Trained in Confucianism, adept painters tried above all to copy their masters as closely as possible, perhaps using an even lighter touch to achieve an even more sublime landscape. Traditional Chinese painting is closely linked to calligraphy, the other major cultural discipline. It has an equally meditative character.

Interest in western art and in freedom of expression first emerged when the Chinese empire collapsed in the 19th century under pressure from colonial powers. Some painters no longer wanted to devote themselves to dreamy interior visions, but instead wanted to look reality in the eye – though without completely breaking with tradition. For instance, Xu Beihong (1895-1953) painted proudly galloping horses as a symbol of a reawakening nation. Under Mao Zedong, the visual arts were largely limited to propagandistic kitsch. Progress stalled for 30 years.


Arnold

The period after Mao's death was marked by renewed enthusiasm for western art. Many artists adapted western styles. A Beijing version of Pop Art was the most commercially successful: it was colourful, striking, satirical, loud. The Swiss diplomat Uli Sigg was one of the first to discover the new Chinese scene. Nowadays his collection is considered the largest and most important of its kind. In 2018, he will bequeath it to the M+ museum of visual culture in Hong Kong. *(fa)*

Lives drifting on the water

Mai Nguyen Thi Thanh is a Vietnamese artist working with various materials and media. One of her main interests is identity, which she explored in an art project with stateless people in Cambodia and Vietnam. Ellen Thalman wrote down Mai's story in her own words for D+C/E+Z.

By Mai Nguyen Thi Thanh

The topic of identity is a personal one for me. I was born in a village near Hanoi in the northern part of Vietnam in 1983. My mother and father were also from there. But when I was little, my father took us south for his job in the town of Hué, where I grew up and live now.

All of my childhood, I felt like an outsider. There were local traditions and stories my family did not know. My grandmother and other relatives were far away, and we rarely saw them, so I did not learn the history and stories of my family like children who live near their relatives. I missed a sense of belonging. Even though my father had a job, we did not have much money. My mother was very resourceful, so she found many ways to make some extra cash. We children made envelopes and shelled peanuts, piles of them, to help support the family. But at that time, it was hard for almost every family, not just ours. We weren't special.

When I was small there was a girl in my neighbourhood who taught children how to draw. She made very colourful, very beautiful drawings and I was always trying to get a peek at them. My father arranged lessons, and later, I always got good marks for drawing in school. So when I finished, I decided to go to the Hué College of Arts to study traditional Vietnamese applied arts. Today, when I am not making art, I teach the traditional art of lacquering wood at Hué University.

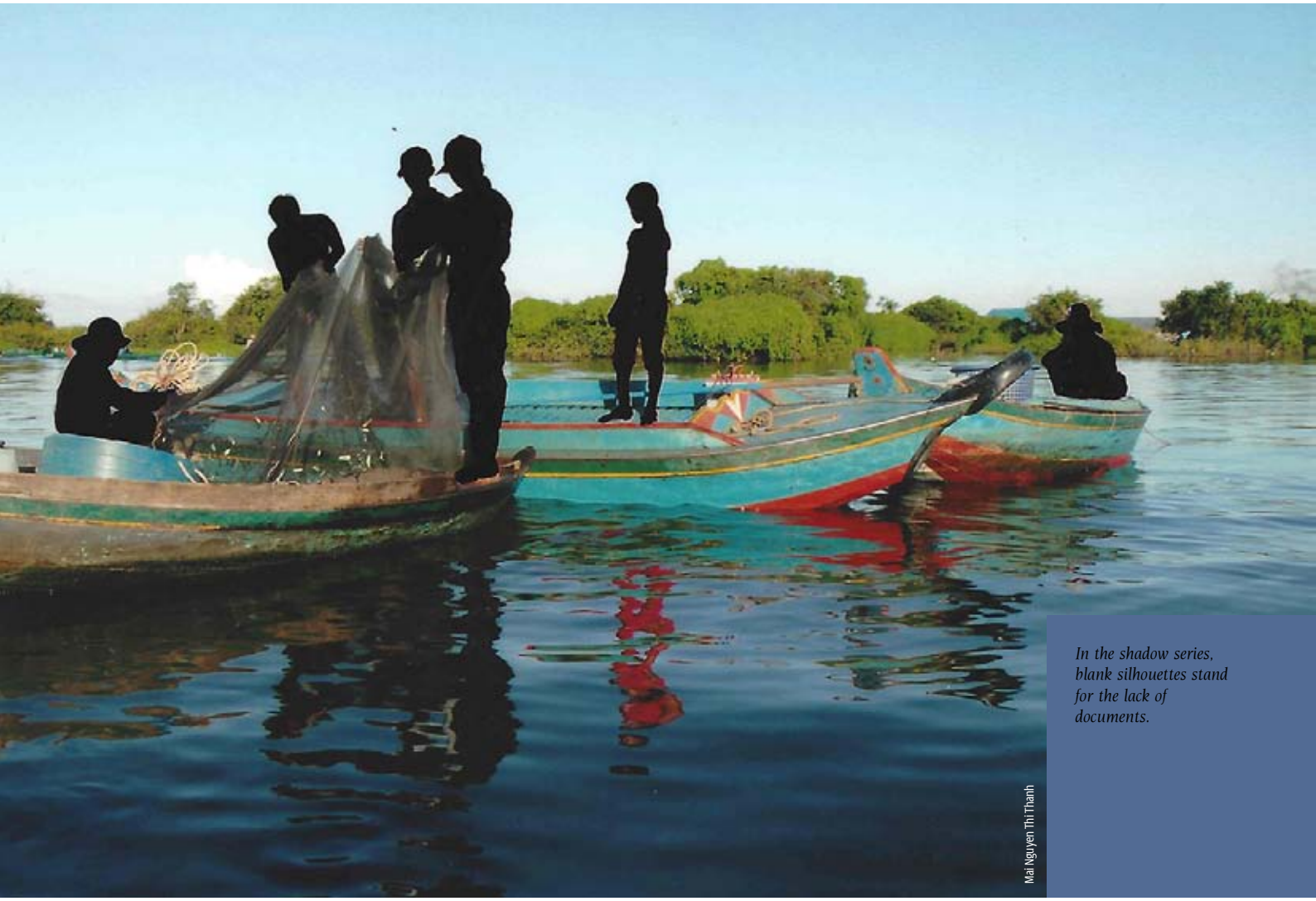
In universities in Vietnam, there are no contemporary art studies. In 2003 or 2004, a group of artists came from Germany to hold a workshop on art installations. They organised a group show after the workshop. It was the first time I had encountered contemporary art. But I realised many of the things that occupied me personally could be expressed this way.

"I wanted to get to know the people"

In 2012, I received my MA in visual arts from Mahasasarakham University in Thailand. In my hometown, however, many people still don't exactly understand what I do.

In 2014, during my residency at an artists' workspace in Phnom Penh, I heard about a Vietnamese fishing village in central Cambodia; stateless people living on boats in the Tonle Sap lake. I wanted to get to know the people, to hear about their lives and what it meant to live as a perpetual migrant. I wanted to find out why people leave everything behind for a new life, and what it is they have lost along the way.

For generations, small Vietnamese communities have been an ethnic minority in the middle of Cam-



Mai Nguyen Thi Thanh

In the shadow series, blank silhouettes stand for the lack of documents.

bodia and along the Tonle Sap waterway, which is upriver from the Vietnamese border. They first went to Cambodia in French colonial times, in the 19th century, or even earlier. The village I visited on the lake is made up of around 400 households. The people have no right to own land, so they must live on the water. Every aspect of their daily lives take place on houseboats – their shops and grocery stores, their schooling and filling stations. They move with the storms and get around by motorboat. People make their living from the lake, collecting wild water hyacinths to sell, or fishing. But poor water quality is killing the fish, adding to their insecurity.

Their existence is adrift, as is their lifestyle. Almost all of them have neither passports, nor birth certificates. They have no official identity. Over and over again, the people I spoke with used the phrase "day by day". They live from one day to the next, with no way to plan for the future. They don't belong to any nation. They feel alienated and trapped by decisions people made who lived long before they were born. One of them told me, that they are like the hyacinths, floating on the water.

In our conversations, identity cards were a recurring issue. Even though many families have lived in Tonle Sap for generations, they get no documents from the Cambodian government. At most, they have a membership card from the Association of Vietnamese Cambodians.

Many people felt that identity cards would improve their lives – giving them access to health care or education. But documentation has also brought trouble in the past. Families lost their papers or even destroyed them during the brutal regime of Pol Pot from 1975 until 1979. The Vietnamese in Cambodia had to hide their ethnicity in fear of their lives. Today, some authorities still intimidate these communities, and often demand bribes.

I visited the people of Tonle Sap several times over the course of a year and lived with them for a few weeks at a time. It took a while for them to trust me. I collected many stories and inspiration from their lives. I also collected their photographs, their names and birthdates and old clothing that they gave me. I fre-

Mai made identity cards for people with no documents for an art installation.

quently use recycled materials in my work, so I decided to print identity cards on pieces of their clothing. I thought a lot about what these cards might meant to people, things like power, dreams, a better life or legitimacy and a sense of belonging. The idea was to create something that represented not just concepts, but also put the faces of real people to these ideas.

Somebody cares

I wanted these people to know that somebody cared about them, to share that with other people in the exhibition planned in Phnom Penh. But I had to explain my work to the villagers, and people did not really understand. Many thought I was a journalist. After all, contemporary art was unfamiliar to them.

When I asked if people in the town would help me make the cards, many were scared. They worried it might stir up trouble for the community, as often things are interpreted in a political way. I had to get permission from the village leader. He sent me to the head of the Vietnamese community. In turn, he consulted someone higher up. In the end, no one felt they could make a decision. So the 348 identity cards that told the story of this community were stitched together by people in my village in Vietnam. However, the authorities did allow me to make a film about the houseboat people, hoping it would raise awareness about the lives of Vietnamese in Cambodia.

This film, called Day by Day, and a series of photographs, called Shadow, became part of an exhibition curated by Roger Nelson, shown first at the Sa Sa Bassac art centre in Phnom Penh, and then at the Sao La, at the Ho Chi Minh Fine Arts Museum in Vietnam earlier this year. This included interviews I conducted in Vietnam in the border town of Long An with people who had returned to Vietnam, but were still stateless for a lack of documents. Many people think their lives will be better when they go back to Vietnam, but also there they have no official identity.

For the Shadow series, I took photographs of village scenes and painted black silhouettes over the people in the snapshots. The blacking out of the figures reminds me of their loss of identity, their lack of a secure place in society, and their uncertain future.

In the exhibtion, I placed the identity cards on a table next to each other. I gave each of the unofficial documents a number starting with many zeros, suggesting that maybe one day there would be cards for the whole world – no politics, no official government stamps and no national identity.

I have myself left my country behind – at least for one year – to go to Europe for the first time in 2015. I am currently a resident at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin on a fellowship from the German KfW Stiftung. On 3 March, I will have a solo show of the work I am doing here. ←

Mai Nguyen Thi Thanh is a Vietnamese artist currently working at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin on a fellowship from the KfW Stiftung. She told her story to Ellen Thalman, who wrote it down.
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Discovering new perspectives

Many creative and performing artists dream of working in a foreign country for some time. Artists-in-residence programmes allow some to do so.

Residence programmes fund artists and lend organisational support to experience a foreign culture. The idea is to facilitate vivid exchange, so artists from different regional backgrounds will discover new perspectives. For different arts there are different programmes. Some are specifically designed for actors, visual artists, musicians or experts in other disciplines. For instance, there are writers-in-residence programmes that allow creative writers to focus on their work while living in a host city. Other programmes are geared to curators, translators or architects.

Durations vary typically from one to 12 months. The longer artists stay, the better they will understand the new environment and translate their impressions into creative work. Longer stays, however, obviously cost more money and take more effort.

Artists need a bit of luck to be awarded this kind of allowance. Most residence programmes only take in one or two artists per year. The hosts are international agencies as well as cultural institutes of strong reputation, and they support different kinds of arts, sending creative people to different places.

Several programmes run by the Goethe Institut are meant for German artists who get to live in Japan, New Zealand or Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example. Creative writers can spend some time in Sarajevo, and visual artists who want to get to know India can spend time at the workshops of 1 Shanti Road in the megacity of Bangalore.

In contrast, the KfW Stiftung prioritises support for young artist from Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. To stimulate intercultural dialogue, for example, the foundation lets visual artists work at artists' collective Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin. "We want to promote promising young individuals and network internationally," says Nicola Müller-schön who heads the foundation's arts programme. She notes that rather few artists-in-residence programmes are geared to non-western artists, and adds: "We focus on them." If artists are interested, however, they cannot apply themselves, but must be proposed by curators and experts who scout internationally for the KfW Stiftung.

The German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademische Austauschdienst - DAAD) runs residence programmes for talented visual artists and musicians in order to facilitate "unique creative projects". German and foreign artists are eligible for its grants, and the residence is always in Germany. One of its options is the well-known Berliner Künstlerprogramm (BKP), which supports internationally acclaimed artists in the disciplines of visual arts, film, creative writing and music.

Typically, participants benefit from their foreign exposure for a long time. The influence of the foreign culture often becomes evident in later works. Moreover, new contacts to artists and curators in different cultures help to build bridges long term. *Jana Jagalski*

Links:

DAAD
https://www.daad.de/deutschland/stipendium/musik-kunst/en/

Goethe-Institut
http://www.goethe.de/ges/prj/res/enindex.htm

KfW Stiftung
http://www.kfw-stiftung.de/content/en/arts/artists-in-residence/description/

KfW Stiftung

The KfW Stiftung lets visual artists work at artists' collective Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin.

Mai Nguyen Thi Thanh

Composers and performers

The Frankfurt-based Ensemble Modern consists of 22 musicians from 10 countries. They perform contemporary music to great international acclaim. "Ruang Suara" is the ensemble's current project with composers and performers from Indonesia. In joint workshops, the musicians experimented with western and Indonesian instruments and created completely new soundscapes. Roland Diry, the managing director of Ensemble Modern, described the unique experience in an interview with Jana Jagalski.

Interview with Roland Diry

Why did you decide to start a project with Indonesian musicians?
Indonesia has a long and rich musical history and culture. The influence of Indonesian music, in particular gamelan music, reaches far beyond the country's borders. Gamelan refers to traditional music from Java and Bali as well as to the sets of musical instruments used. Over time, this kind of music has blended with other musical styles from around the world to form an interesting mix.

Did you consider any other countries?
No, not seriously. Initially we looked for interesting points of reference in a joint effort with KfW Stiftung, and particularly took Africa into account. Many African countries have musicians who play very well. But we ultimately chose Indonesia because we felt that working with Indonesian musicians would provide us with the best opportunity to make our ideas of contemporary music come true.

Did you have any previous experience with musicians from developing countries and emerging markets?
Yes, we have repeatedly cooperated with musicians from around the world in other projects. For example, we had a joint project with Indian musicians seven years ago. One of our violinists is Indian, which inspired us and helped us to make contacts. For our Into Project in cooperation with the Goethe Institut we invited composers to four world cities for a month and promoted their exchange with local artists from various disciplines nine years ago. We hoped that the music would reflect the character of each city, and it did.

How are musicians from emerging markets perceived in Europe?
There is no single answer to that question. What matters most to us, as an ensemble, is whether persons are interesting in and of themselves, so cooperation will result in highly sophisticated work.

How did you select the eight Indonesian musicians whom you are working with for the current project?
This time we took a completely new approach to finding our partners. We were in a different position than when we started our collaboration with Indian musicians, because we didn't have previous contacts in Indonesia and couldn't simply invite composers to Germany or commission something from them. That wouldn't have worked. Music in Indonesia is very social, much more so than in Germany. The act of listening is the alpha and omega of Indonesian music, but also of how people interact with each other in general.

So what did you do this time?
Well, we sought out "elder statesman" of Indonesian music. These experienced musicians and famous composers were our scouts, recommending talented young musicians. We wanted to find interesting musicians from the next generation and beyond, since they are the ones who will shape the country and its music in the future. The veteran musicians indicated 23 persons. We invited all of them to Jakarta for a week. A representative from each group of instruments in the Ensemble Modern accompanied us to Jakarta, and each of them performed a piece in order to give the local musicians an idea of what we had in mind. Next, the Indonesian musicians introduced themselves and presented their ideas, which were most diverse. We could only select eight people, and the choice was hard.

Katrin Schilling

On stage in Frankfurt in October.

What do the composers you ultimately chose have in common?
Well, we ended up with a colourful cross-section of talent. Some of the composers are quite experienced, while the youngest is still a student. What unites them is certainly that they are all trained in contemporary music, but are all rooted in gamelan music in their own, particular ways nonetheless. All of them work as professional musicians in Indonesia. Unlike in Germany, Indonesian musicians tend to work as composers and perform their works.

Early this year, you invited the eight musicians to a workshop in Frankfurt. How did that go?
First of all, everyone had to get to know one another. It fast became obvious that the group was very open-minded. That matters very much, because it allows musicians to try out their ideas without inhibitions. Since the Indonesian and western notation systems are not entirely compatible, we requested help from an alumnus of the Ensemble Modern Akademie. He has perfect pitch and helped us to come as close as possible to what the musicians wanted, given that we could not simply transcribe things from one notation system to the other. I think it worked out very well.

Did you have to deal with any unexpected difficulties?
No, we didn't. We benefited from our past experiences. The challenges we faced tended to be related to music, like the incompatible notation systems I just mentioned. And in Germany, it proved to be rather difficult to find the exact instruments the Indonesian musicians needed.

Are there any moments you have particularly fond memories of?
Oh yes, I had many wonderful experiences. I was especially impressed by the way the musicians who unfortunately didn't make it into the top eight dealt with being rejected. They wanted to know why they weren't selected, but they remained very friendly and open-minded. It is absolutely essential that we treat eachother as equals. The recent experience has reinforced this lesson once more.

How are the Ruang Suara concerts funded?
The KfW Stiftung was prepared to initiate a cooperation project with Indonesia. It was only thanks to its support that we were able to stage this concert series. We travel as a group of 24, and air fares alone are very expensive. The Kulturstiftung des Bundes and Goethe Institut were important partners as well.

How do you hope audiences will react?
I hope that audiences will be open to hearing unusual and different sounds. It takes time to perceive the subtle nuances, especially because at first glance many things sound similar. In the run-up to the project, I heard someone say: "I don't really like contemporary music, but this project is fantastic." To my mind, that is a good illustration of our project not just being about a certain musical approach, but rather about the way intercultural cooperation creates the basis for something much greater. ←

Link:
Short Ruang Suara video clip:
https://www.ensemble-modern.com/de/ensemble_modern/impressionen/ruang-suara-2015

Roland Diry
is the managing director of the Ensemble Modern.
https://www.ensemble-modern.com

Facilitating more than leading

ActionAid is the first big international non-governmental organisation (INGO) that moved its headquarters from the global north to the global south. In this essay, the chief executive of ActionAid International elaborates why that step was necessary and how the global organisation is changing.

By Adriano Campolina

There has been much discussion lately in development and human-rights circles on decentralisation and internationalisation – the process by which international NGOs based in the global north increase their presence and decision-making in countries in the global south. For ActionAid these are not new ideas to be realised sometime in the distant future. It is how we have been working for many years.

ActionAid International moved its headquarters from London to Johannesburg in January 2004. It remains the only international development organisation headquartered in Africa, although others are set to follow.

Our move reflected our core values and ways of working. It was a logical step in a process which had begun many years before and still continues.

Tribune

ActionAid was founded in the UK as a charity focussed on supporting children in 1972. It has since become an international organisation working today with 15 million people in 45 countries with the goal of ending poverty and injustice. We recognised that if we were serious about eradicating poverty in the developing world all our members – not just the richer ones – needed to be involved in our decision-making.

ActionAid is not a centralised, top-down structure; it is a global federation that is governed and run by equal members across the world. All our member organisations, wherever they are based, have the same voting power and voice as their European, North American and Australian peers that have traditionally provided most of the funding.

Emphasising rights

ActionAid believes that the fight to end poverty and inequality must start at a grassroots level. The people and communities affected must be actively involved. When people living in poverty know their rights and can act on this knowledge, long-term change becomes more likely. Their concerns and voices are at the core of everything we do and drive our plans to end poverty.

By linking local and national action into regional and international efforts, we can create a powerful movement demanding change. Our role is very much as a catalyst, helping to make the connection between local civil society and social movements and like-minded groups across the planet, and working with them in international fora. For example, ActionAid's Tax Power campaign extends from communities in Zambia demanding their government to end tax incentives to multinational companies and to spend the money on health, education and other vital public services to lobbying the G20 to introduce global tax reform.

Internationalisation has helped increase ActionAid's accountability to the people that we work with as well as our legitimacy within countries. Working closely with social movements and national partners, we are helping to hold governments and other decision-makers to account.

Sharing power means more power

Internationalisation requires a shift of power that not all organisations may be comfortable with. The key is recognising that sharing power doesn't mean hav-

ActionAid

ActionAid posters used at tax justice march in Lusaka, Zambia.

ing less power. By working together as a global partnership we have a bigger impact.

For ActionAid, internationalisation has not been a one-off action or an end in itself. We have continued to review the process in order to improve our ways of working and make us more effective.

Last year we restructured our global operations and increased the role of national-level members within the global organisation. Some of the functions previously provided by the ActionAid International Secretariat have been delegated to national-level ActionAid organisations. They are now using their experience and expertise to lead the federation on specific issues. For example, ActionAid Bangladesh is now leading our work on climate change and resilience along with ActionAid USA, while ActionAid Liberia now leads our global campaign for safer cities for women.

ActionAid International's role is now less about leading and more about facilitating greater cross-country and collaborative activities. That includes increased South-South cooperation as well as support for activities at an international level such as the upcoming UN climate summit to maximise impact.

One of the areas we are focusing on is support for fundraising in middle-income countries and emerging economies such as India, Brazil or Nigeria. The idea is to help them raise funds for use at home and abroad. This is not just about generating more money – although like all charities we must find new sources of funding. It also helps to ensure that the national ActionAid has more influence on its government as citizens contribute to its resources and support the push for change.

Fundraising is not the only area in which we are witnessing a change in the traditional divide between north and south. Across the globe, the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the few is creating a widening gap between the richest and the rest of society. The combined wealth of the richest one percent is more than the combined wealth of the remaining 99%, and the majority of the world's poor now live in middle-income countries. Poverty and inequality are related, and they are increasingly problems within countries – not just between countries.

Challenging the power of the few and ending inequality requires greater strategic cooperation between developmental NGOs, environmental groups, trade unions and human-rights organisations. To this end, ActionAid signed a joint statement early this year with the Association of Women in Development, Oxfam, Greenpeace and Civicus agreeing to increase cooperation and action to reduce inequality and eradicate poverty. The statement was later supported by the International Trade Unions Confederation.

We will continue to seek new alliances and partnerships to achieve our common goals and create the future we want for all. Together we are stronger. Together we can achieve change. ←

Adriano Campolina

is the chief executive of ActionAid International.

http://www.actionaid.org

Link:

Joint statement by ActionAid, Greenpeace, Civicus, Awid, Oxfam:
http://www.actionaid.org/2015/03/securing-just-and-sustainable-world-means-challenging-power-1

Civic mindedness

Scope for action

On behalf of Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Engagement Global is supporting the developmental efforts of civil-society organisations and is facilitating international exchange. In an interview with Hans Dembowski, Jens Kreuter, the chief executive, elaborated on how this government agency operates.

Interview with Jens Kreuter

Governments of various developing countries and emerging markets are increasingly restricting the space for civil society. They argue that civil-society organisations are serving western interests. Engagement Global supports this kind of organisations internationally. How do you respond to the criticism?

The human rights are our only guideline in our promotion of civil-society organisations, local-government agencies and schools. Beyond the human rights, we have no other agenda, though we do commit to internationally accepted agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals, which the UN General Assembly recently endorsed unanimously. The list of human rights has similarly been adopted by the UN, and most countries have signed up to the relevant conventions. Accordingly, we do not consider the human rights to be western in any relevant way. The human rights are universal. Organisations that apply for our support must appreciate them, and they must accept pluralism. By the way, we provide funds to some organisations in Germany even though they are quite critical of our Federal Government.

You are disbursing government money, so one would assume that you are pursuing government interests. Well, in Germany and Europe, we have experienced that the unrestricted exchange of opinions is most valuable, and so is vivid popular participation in public affairs. Both facilitate democratic decision making and peaceful resolu-

tion of disputes. In other words, they facilitate peace and political stability. Free exchange between nations safeguards peace in a similar sense. For the Federal Government, peace is a top priority, and that marks our mission. We are not serving any other German interests, not even economic ones. For the same reasons, we want your team at D+C/E+Z to create a credible forum for debate on our behalf. We have not assigned you to praise our government's global-development policies. We know that open and serious debate benefits all parties concerned. If however, a government does not respect human rights, it is true that we criticise its stance. That government, however, is opposing universally accepted principles.

You have a PhD in Protestant theology. Doesn't that tell radical Muslims that you have a missionary's agenda?
No, that would be a big mistake. Every human being has a set of values. Mine is explicit, and that compels me to handle my own belief system with sensitivity and make sure that funding decisions are not marked by my personal bias. I also have a degree in law, which is a qualification typical of chief executives. Moreover, the BMZ does not rely on us for managing its cooperation with the churches. There are other institutions for doing so, and they do not support any missionary work either. The BMZ only funds efforts that focus exclusively on development and are designed in a pluralistic way, not targeting only the members of any single faith.

Civil society is supposed to be independent of the state. Why does it need governmental support?
The BMZ has published an interesting booklet on the matter, its title is: "Strategy on government-civil society cooperation in post-2015 development policy". An active civil society is obviously viable without government funding. We have such an active civil society in Germany. It includes sports clubs, neighbourhood self-help groups, church parishes, social initiatives, support groups for refugees and much more. All of this would happen without government intervention. Nonetheless, state support makes sense in some cases:

- First of all, the government sometimes wants things to happen, which its own agencies cannot implement as well as non-governmental organisations can. The reasons are that NGOs have better access to target groups and are better placed to stimulate civic activism.
- Second, it makes sense in developmental terms to support charities, which depend on donations, to plan long term and to implement more ambitious projects than they otherwise would be capable of. This kind of funding benefits their international partners.
- Finally, we need transparency and reliability. Civil-society organisations must do solid accounting, they must be managed in a spirit of internal democracy, and they must be able to organise larger networks. Accordingly, it is appropriate to help them develop the capacities they need for these purposes.


Welsing/Engagement Global

Weltwärts volunteer (right) in Tanzania.

Please give an example of what civil-society organisations are better at than state agencies.
Well, consider our weltwärts programme. It allows young Germans to experience life in developing countries and emerging markets, and it allows young people from our partner countries to become active and learn in Germany. Our Federal Government believes that this kind of exchange is important because it boosts public understanding of international affairs. Weltwärts volunteers are supposed to take part in daily life and witness social reality, and civil-society organisations are much better at making that happen than government agencies. The volunteers are not supposed to help implement government policies, after all, they are supposed to get an unfiltered idea of the country they are staying in. In a very fundamental sense, our mission is to give people scope for action and learning, but not to micromanage what they do. We are not only serving the BMZ, which funds us; we are also serving civil society.

Some civil-society activists from developing countries say they are uncomfortable with their non-governmental partners from the global north being more powerful. The difference is evident, among other things, in the fact that the northern-based NGOs have more money and get more government support. What can be done?
Well, in the first place I'd say that it is good when such dissatisfaction is expressed. It shows that people are considering matters. Once doubt is cast on something, fruitful discussion becomes possible. It is true that there is a power difference, and it is not easy to change this fact. We are weighing options however. What is certainly needed is to boost the spirit of partnership, transparency and mutual accountability as envisioned in the UN 2030 Agenda to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. ←

Link:
BMZ strategy on cooperation with civil society:
http://www.bmz.de/en/publications/type_of_publication/strategies/Strategiepapier343_05_2014.pdf

Jens Kreuter

is the chief executive of Engagement Global.
http://www.engagement-global.de/

The social dimension of "desert power"

In the Middle East and North Africa, conditions are ideal for solar thermal power stations producing climate-friendly energy. But it is doubtful that such large-scale facilities are an unqualified benefit for the local community. A pilot research project has examined the impacts of large solar thermal power plants on people's livelihoods.

By Boris Schinke and Conrad Schetter

Many countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) currently stand at a historic crossroads: a fundamental paradigm shift is needed to stabilise the region politically, protect it from the impacts of climate change and create opportunities for socioeconomic development at the same time. Old political power structures and the dependence on fossil fuels need to be overcome. Innovative solutions must be developed to meet the demands of the Arab spring. Environmentally sustainable power generation will play a key role. The region's vast expanse of desert offers ample space and sunlight, so large-scale concentrated solar power stations look promising.

Large-scale production of "desert power" is technically feasible. It could significantly help to mitigate climate change and improve energy security in the MENA region in only a few years. What is more, combining large concentrated solar power stations with desalination plants could help stave off the region's impending water and food crisis. This technological approach would also drive the development of new industries, the transfer of skills and the creation of new jobs at the local level.

Protests against power plants

The downside must not be ignored however. In developing countries in particular, major (energy) infrastructure projects have often triggered protests and even violent conflict because, in the eyes of local people, negative impacts outweighed

Schinke

The concentrated solar power plant Noor I at the foot of the Atlas Mountains in Morocco.

promised benefits. In southern Morocco, for example, local civil society blocked plans for a 72 megawatt oil-fired power station. The project developers had not clearly communicated the social and environmental impacts. The result was massive resistance.

Plans for power stations have suffered a similar fate in other places, for example at Nuwaiba in Egypt, where the construction of a gas-fired power station threatened to harm local livelihoods and tourism. Local Bedouins protested, and the project was shelved.

Large solar thermal facilities have also sparked conflict between operators and local residents. In the case of the Spanish solar power station Andasol, for example, farmers whose land had been expropriated were extremely unhappy with the small compensations they received. In the end, owing to public pressure and the operator's readiness to compromise, a mutually acceptable solution was found, and the farmers were given greater compensations in the form of money or new land.

The Social CSP research project

At present, the debate on large-scale solar power facilities in the MENA region focuses predominantly on technical and economic feasibility of concentrated solar power (CSP) technology. This is inadequate. Other issues matter too, and renewable energies per se – i.e. just because they provide climate-friendly electricity – are not necessarily sustainable.

A first study on how CSP projects impact on local livelihoods and whether they contribute to or block sustainable development has been prepared by Germanwatch, the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy and the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC). The pilot research project was called "Social CSP" and it was supported by local partners. The focus was the Noor I power station which is being built at Ouarzazate in Morocco. "Noor" means "light" in Arabic.

Based largely on participative fieldwork, the research project got support from Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) from 2013 to 2015. The project took account of local community interests in the Noor I project and showed that, in the future, large CSP projects need to be geared towards social sustainability in the MENA region.

Schinke

Clean power.

The example of Ouarzazate

What is taking shape at the gateway to the Moroccan Sahara is an impressive step towards a sustainable energy future.

Surrounded by traditional Berber villages, the world's largest solar thermal power complex is under construction on a stony 3,000 hectare desert site near Ouarzazate. King Mohammed VI launched the 500 megawatt (MW) project in 2009.

Like a giant hall of mirrors, the curved parabolic collectors of the first phase (Noor I with 160 MW) spread over a barren plateau in the Atlas Mountains. The facility is due to come on-stream this year. Three more compounds of the solar power complex will follow and are scheduled for completion by 2019. The giant scheme will supply more than a million Moroccans with clean electricity and reduce carbon emissions by millions of tonnes.

Four more solar complexes modelled on Noor will be constructed in the coming years in other sunny regions of Morocco. Accounting for 42% of installed capacity, they will help the country meet around 30% of its electricity needs from regenerative sources by 2020. For the Kingdom of Morocco, which has no significant oil, gas or coal reserves and currently imports 95% of its energy resources, this is a vital strategy for modern, climate-friendly development.

The social dimension of Noor I

The Moroccan Agency for Solar Energy (MASEN) took great pains to secure community acceptance for the Noor project. For one thing, the power station has Morocco's popular king as its patron; for another, MASEN took special account of local circumstances. The project developers sought to identify and avoid possible negative impacts in advance. They did a good job, and the Noor power facility is viewed with pride by the local community in and around Ouarzazate. It is generally accepted.

Examples of the positive and negative impacts for the local community identified by the Social CSP project are summed up below.

Positive impacts:

- Employment: primary concerns of the local community were that a large share of jobs should benefit the local workforce – especially the young – and that local supply chains and local industries should be involved. The Noor project developers met that concern by awarding around 700 of the 1,800 jobs created during the construction phase to local workers. When labour was sourced, nearby communities and local construction firms were given preferential treatment. Another 850 jobs were awarded to workers from other parts of Morocco, and the remaining 250 went to international engineers. Far less labour will be required to operate the power facility. In regard to maintenance and related issues, priority will be given to Moroccan firms. The experience and expertise acquired will be used for other solar projects in Morocco.
- Capacity building: people in the region normally are not well educated, and there hardly are any local industrial capacities. A special focus was thus on capacity building programmes to train people for skilled-labour jobs and aligning the training programmes to a bachelor programme at the local university.
- Compensation for loss of land use: despite the size of the solar power plant, there was no need for resettlement. However, land use will be restricted in the future. For example, firewood and medicinal herbs can no longer be collected, and livestock farmers will no longer have access for grazing purposes. The communities affected received monetary compensation, however, so local welfare, education and healthcare facilities can be improved.

Negative impacts:

- Water consumption: the biggest local fear was that vital water resources would be lost because of the water needed to cool the power plant. In response to this valid concern, the decision was taken to use dry cooling technology for project phases Noor II and III. Moreover, the oasis communities affected were promised support for water resource management.
- Participation, communication and expectation management: community involvement in project planning was meant to ensure that local needs and concerns would be addressed early on. This approach does not have deep traditional roots in Moroccan politics. Despite the efforts made, however, concerned citizens in many localities felt they were not treated as equals and regarded the project management as technocratic and "top-down". Local communities also felt they were insufficiently informed about the different stages of the construction project and complained that only those well-disposed towards the project were involved in direct dialogue, while whole sections of the community remained excluded. This resulted in insufficient knowledge about the project, which led to unrealistic expectations and widespread disappointment, especially with regard to the number of new jobs created and the scale of social development projects.

Conclusion

The Arab spring fundamentally changed the environment for large-scale renewable energy projects in North Africa. If the right lessons are learned from the political demands, policies like the Morocco Solar Plan could boost the region's development. The Social CSP research project shows that the success of the Morocco Solar Plan hinges crucially on taking into account the needs and priorities of local communities. Other vital requirements are early, dialogue-based, inclusive civic participation, transparency in planning and implementation, a detailed knowledge of social settings and a high degree of cultural sensitivity.

For the next construction phases of the Noor complex and future locations of the Morocco Solar Plan, greater attention should be paid to informal dialogue between project managers and community members. That could lead not only to a better understanding of the project, but also to early identification and resolution of possible problems.

Link:

Report: Social CSP
https://germanwatch.org/en/download/11797.pdf

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Media struggle with corruption

Corruption is ubiquitous in Bangladesh. Raising public awareness is one way to fight it. Media play an important watchdog role in this regard, but their freedom is often restricted. They are subject to political influence and business interests. Some journalists are physically threatened, and licenses get withdrawn.

By Rozina Islam

In Bangladesh ubiquitous corruption presents a formidable challenge. While the vast majority of the people are victims of corruption, a limited number of powerful individuals misuse entrusted funds and power for private gains. Adding to the problem, institutions to control and prevent corruption are weak and leadership often fails.

Today, Bangladesh's citizens demand transparency. Officially, good governance and anti-corruption action have high priorities on the development agenda. But although all governments since Bangladesh's independence in 1971 have promised to establish good governance and eliminate corruption, there has been little progress in improving governance, strengthening accountability and ensuring transparency.

One way to minimise corruption is to raise public awareness. Electronic and print media are crucial in this regard. Manzoor Hasan, advisor to the institute of Governance Studies at BRAC University, says: "The media in general play a very important watchdog role in Bangladesh, raising issues and protecting individuals and causes. They are prominent in promoting good governance."

The constitution of Bangladesh guarantees press freedom, but also foresees "reasonable restriction". Libel, sedition and reporting on national security issues are subject to criminal prosecution. Reporters – like other Bangladeshi citizens – can be held for up to 90 days without trial under the 1974 Special Powers Act.

In 2010, the government took a step forward by scrapping a provision that allowed courts to issue arrest warrants for journalists and publishers in defamation cases. Legislative changes, such as the Right to Information Act (2009), seem to demonstrate the commitment of the current government, which is run by the Awami League, to media freedom. However, the government has shut down several media and online outlets, and restrictive proposals for a new media bill rang alarm bells in 2011.

In Bangladesh, there are basically four kinds of media outlets, their purposes being:

- to promote and protect business interests,
- to advance political ideologies,
- to make money by currying favour with important political or business leaders, and finally
- journalism in the sense of distributing serious information.

According to media observers and professionals, only very few outlets belong in the last category. Moreover, everybody wants a piece of the lucrative advertising market, which is reportedly worth more than $ 122 million annually. Thus, media corporations want to be seen as purveyors of reliable and objective information by an increasingly media-savvy public, but they do not necessarily fulfil that claim.

Bangladesh has a tradition of diverse and independent newspapers run by owner-editors who have influenced politics since independence in 1971. Over the past decade, however, large privately owned Bangladeshi corporations have moved into the media market. Most of the national media is now owned by giant corporate groups with roots in other industries, such as real estate, pharmaceuticals, retailing, garments, banking et cetera.

For instance, the leading real estate company, the Bashundhara Group, publishes the Bengali-language dailies Kaler Kantho and Bangladesh Protidin, the English-language Daily Sun and the online

Defining corruption

Corruption is a complex multi-faceted social phenomenon with innumerable manifestations. It takes place as an outcome of deficiencies in the existing public administration apparatuses and systems as well as cultural, economic, political and social factors. Basically it is about making use of public office or resources for private gains. However, differences of opinion still exist as to what precisely adds up to corruption. The reason is people's understanding is shaped by their personal situation. It is encouraging, however, that the topic is getting more public attention.

Attempts have been made to classify different forms of corruption into broad categories. Corruption can result from personal, institutionalised and administrative malfunctions. Governments need well-coordinated and well-designed strategies that limit opportunities for the abuse of public office and reduce the likelihood of individuals profiting from corruption, whether as payers or recipients of bribes. Moreover, civil-society activism can contribute to fighting corruption.

A core issue is to make people aware how public office and public goods differ from private fortune. An important point is that political leaders and civil servants are bound by duties. They are not rulers who can hand out and accept favours as they please. *(ri)*

Abir Abdullah/picture-alliance/dpa

Newspapers cannot provide an unfiltered picture of reality: reader at a train station in Dhaka.

BanglaNews24.com. Several of these are large buyers of media advertising, eager to reach an attractive market: the country's burgeoning middle class.

Some people argue that stiff competition keeps their political preferences in check, and that the need to build and maintain market shares provides a strong incentive to report events honestly and professionally. Others warn that conflicts of interests may arise. Shahidul Alam, founder of Drik, a social-advocacy media group, says: "The mainstream media outlets won't cover telecom companies in negative ways as that is their main source of revenue."

However, research shows that objectivity sells better than bias. So news stories need to be covered professionally – regardless of their impact on the image of a particular business or political party.

Under political pressure

Media backed by powerful, politically connected business conglomerates and journalists based in Dhaka are less at risk of being threatened by political leaders than the plenty of lively media outlets and journalists in smaller towns. "Regional media are strongly controlled by local administrations, face physical threats and closure, and although they run many stories on corruption, for example, these are rarely picked up or given priority by the national media," says Robert Morini, head of press and communications at the British High Commission.

In face of such challenges, Syed Fahim Munaim, the chief executive of Maasranga TV, explains: "Freedom of expression exists, but self-censorship works, especially among those who are pro-government."

National media outlets are often targeted by incoming governments that perceive political bias in their reporting. New governments tend to exploit what many see as an increasingly politicised judiciary to close down or restrict the operations of media houses they think are supporting the opposition. Journalists who clash with authorities can have their press accreditation withdrawn, and television and radio licences only tend to be issued to those sympathetic to the government of the day.

There is also the phenomenon of "brown-envelope journalism". Journalists are paid by third parties for articles that promote those parties' interests. Many journalists do not accept that kind of bribes, but as some media houses simply do not pay good salaries, others depend on this additional source of income. ←

Tribune

Rozina Islam

is senior reporter of the Bangladeshi newspaper ProthomAlo and one of the winners of the Media Award on Corruption Prevention 2014 (see box below).

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Media Award on Corruption Prevention

Rozina Islam was one of the winners of the Media Award on Corruption Prevention Bangladesh in 2014. The award was created in the context of a series of pilot projects on media and good governance by GIZ and Deutsche Welle Akademie: These projects are funded by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and are meant to showcase how professional media contributes to better governance.

In 2014, the award was granted for the first time. It is the result of a joint initiative of Dhaka University's Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, the national government's Anti Corruption Commission and civil-society organisations, such as the Press Institute Bangladesh.

The award is bestowed annually. The winner from each category takes part in the Global Media Forum in Bonn, an event that convenes journalists from all over the world and is organised by Deutsche Welle.

Links:

Media Award on Corruption Prevention Bangladesh:
http://www.media-award-bangladesh.net/english/

Global Media Forum:
http://www.dw.com/en/global-media-forum/best-of-gmf-2014/s-30956

Merely digital propaganda?

The Indian government is fond of information technology and is trying to project it as a solution to all problems. If it does not fulfil its aspirations of expanding access to the internet, however, its new Digital India will not create more than buzz. Today, the vast majority of the people does not have internet-enabled devices.

By Dinesh C. Sharma

Debate

India is recognised globally as a leading player in information technology (IT) and business-process outsourcing. This development has been based on the availability of a large number of engineering graduates, fiscal incentives provided by the government and the growth of technology clusters in various cities. India's IT industry now has annual revenues worth about $ 150 billion.

The industry is focused on exports, but domestic demand now accounts for about one third of revenues, not least thanks to mobile telephony and the internet. India has 980 million mobile-phone subscriptions and about 160 million mobile internet users. The total number of internet users is estimated at 300 million. Demand for e-commerce is growing. Social media are popular.

Digital tools are used to shape public opinion and spread political ideologies. Prime Minister Narendra Modi of the right-wing Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) is fond of doing so. In late September, his personal Twitter account had more than 15 million followers, and his Facebook page was "liked" by 30 million people. The numbers are increasing fast. In June 2015, Modi launched an Android mobile app named after him.

The prime minister also aspires to widen people's access to government services through digital technology. His government has rolled out an initiative it calls Digital India. This programme includes connecting 250,000 village councils to broadband internet, offering free WIFI hotspots in selected cities, delivering services online and encouraging digital manufacturing.

Some government services have been computerised for quite some time, and with considerable success. Examples are the issuing of driving licences and passports or the filing of tax declarations and entries in land registers. This kind of e-government helps people save time. Accordingly, Digital India is rebranding all existing e-governance projects under one umbrella and adds some cosmetic changes. All government departments have been asked to develop mobile apps on top of their websites. There are apps for all the prime minister's pet schemes, from sanitation to "save the girl child". The apps provide text, infographics, audio files and video clips relating to the programme concerned.

Modi invites people to send him ideas and pictures, and shares or retweets some of them. Such digital engagement with citizens, particularly his fan followers, helps to create a buzz about programmes and events. Such buzz certainly helps the government's PR efforts, but it is not clear that the ground situation is really improving. It remains to be seen whether sharing pictures of daughters on mobile phones will actually help to improve the sex ratio in a country where many female foetuses are aborted. It is not evident that the lack of health and education facilities is being reduced by people clicking on apps.

The idea behind e-governance and digitally empowering of citizens is to remove layers of red tape, make intermediaries redundant and expose government servants directly to citizens' demands. The goal is to reduce opportunities for corruption. Success, however, depends on reforming the bureaucracy. Merely adding a layer of digital services won't help. India needs to shore up its civil service.

One must not forget, moreover, that about 75 % of Indians still lack internet-enabled devices. Any web-based e-service will therefore bypass them. Digital empowerment is not an issue of fancy apps. It is an issue of equity, access and affordability. Innovative ways will have to be devised to overcome these hurdles and for reforming functioning of the government to make it transparent and accountable. Otherwise, Digital India will remain a mere slogan.

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Screenshot: Narendra Modi's facebook and twitter pages in late September.

Burkina Faso on the brink

After the failed coup in September, Burkina Faso's interim government is back in office, and general elections are set to take place soon. The West African country's future is uncertain though, and its example shows how difficult changes of government are in Africa.

By Karim Okanla

In the 1980s, a Marxist revolution took place in Burkina Faso. In October 1987, its leader, military captain Thomas Sankara, was assassinated. The man who silenced him was believed to be his ally and "friend", Captain Blaise Compaoré, who then spent 27 years at the helm of the country. He was finally ousted in October last year by popular uprising.

Compaoré fled abroad, but his political legacy is still haunting the country. On 17 September, the elite presidential guard Compaoré had left behind staged another coup. They detained the country's transitional government that was busy planning the presidential and parliamentary elections that were scheduled for 11 October. Among those detained were interim President Michel Kafando and interim Prime Minister Yacouba Isaac Zida.

The country's youth reacted angrily again. They demanded the surrender of coup leader General Gilbert Diendéré, who wanted Compaoré loyalists to be allowed to run in the election. Diendéré finally succumbed to growing domestic and international pressure. He was arrested and is now awaiting trial. Both Kafando and Zida were reinstated, and the elections are now set to take place on 22 November.

Observers believe that Diendéré and his acolytes were afraid of losing their privileges, should the civilian transition process succeed. Another reason for the coup may lie in a feeling of betrayal by Prime Minister Zida, himself a former high-ranking officer of the elite presidential guard. Some called him a turncoat colluding with the civilians just to save his skin. Diendéré suspected Zida of endorsing a plan to dissolve the presidential guard.

Alban Kini, a Burkinabé journalist with Sidwaya, a national daily, and the APANEWS press agency in Ouagadougou, believes that the botched coup was useful for the democratic transition, because "it has helped to clear the air": the much feared presidential guard proved to be a rather empty shell and has now been dissolved.

picture-alliance/dpa

Michel Kafando (centre), president of the transition government, at its ceremony of restoration after the putsch.

Abuja-based Abdullahi Shehu, a former director general of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, an institution of ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), has a point when he says that ECOWAS failed to condemn the coup immediately as the African Union did. ECOWAS tried to mediate, and only took a clear anti-coup stance after Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari declared that his country did not support the coup and was not interested in mediation.

Omar Dieng, a senior editor with APA news agency in Dakar, Senegal, comes to ECOWAS' defence. He argues that mediation efforts undertaken by Presidents Macky Sall of Senegal and Thomas Boni Yayi of Benin in the wee hours of the coup were useful. "ECOWAS played the role of a fire-fighter," he says. Thanks to the rapid intervention by the two presidents, "the West African organisation was able to broker a clumsy agreement between the conflicting parties." However, Dieng concludes that "it would have been far better to prevent the outbreak of crises in the sub-region, rather than wait until the wound festers."

In the eyes of Jerome Carlos, a Benin-based journalist, the situation in Burkina Faso is a vivid example of the failure of African states. Carlos believes that the AU should set up think tanks to analyse the Burkina case, so that lessons can be drawn and used elsewhere in Africa.

The main question, however, remains whether authoritarian leaders are willing to learn. Burundi's president recently ignored the Arusha Accords which allow a maximum of two terms in office. The strongman is now serving a third term, amid daily assassinations of both opponents and loyalists. Next door, the president of Rwanda has also announced that he will run for a third term – in blatant violation of the law. The same scenario seems to be repeating itself in both Congos, where the leaders are openly tampering with the constitution. In this setting, it is encouraging that Diendéré's coup has failed in Burkina.

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Peace must be top priority

In elections in June, the AK Party (AKP) lost its absolute majority in the Turkish parliament – and President Erdogan lost his grip on unrestrained power. His critics consider him one of the fomenters of the violent chaos now plaguing the country.

By Timur Tinç

"This would not have happened, had one single party won 400 seats in parliament." This is what President Recep Tayyip Erdogan revealingly said in a TV interview a few weeks ago. What he meant was that an absolute AKP majority would have enabled him to transform Turkey's political system into a presidential system with a powerful head of state at the top. His statement indicated that he wants absolute power for himself, and he seems to be willing to do anything to get it.

For three months now, Turkey has been suffering an new wave of violence. In July, a suicide bomber who was close to the terrorist ISIS militia, wreaked havoc in Suruç. Terrorists of the illegal Kurdish militia PKK have once more begun to attack soldiers and police officers, and the military is retaliating in kind. Almost 200 people have been killed in recent weeks.

The saddest event, so far, was the atrocious attack on a peace rally in Ankara on 10 October. Almost 100 people died. Who is to blame? In the eyes of Erdogan and his faith-based, conservative party, the culprits are terrorists of the PKK, Islamist extremists of the ISIS kind or the clandestine leftist organisation DHKP-C – plus, of course, the pro-Kurdish Party of the Peoples (HDP), which has close links to the PKK, but opposes violent means.

Even before the June election, Erdogan, the AKP and supportive media tried to equate the HDP with the PKK in the hope of preventing it from getting enough votes to win seats in parliament. They didn't convince the voters, however, and several legislators now belong to the HDP. As a result, the AKP no longer commands an absolute majority and thus cannot change the constitution the way Erdogan wants. Coalition talks between the AKP and the Kemalist CHP ensued, but they were farcical. As was to be feared, Erdogan did not give Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu the go ahead for such an alliance. Another election is now scheduled for 1 November.

Soon after the AKP's election defeat, Fuat Avni, a mysterious whistle-blower, warned via Twitter that Erdogan was preparing a strategy of chaos to achieve his ultimate goal of establishing a presidential system. According to Avni, Erdogan told Hakan Fidan, a close ally who heads Turkey's secret service MIT, to reactivate his contacts within the PKK. In any case, it did not take much to undermine the fragile and cumbersome peace process that Erdogan himself had started some years ago.

It is becoming crystal clear that, from the AKP perspective, the peace process was only meant to mobilise Kurdish votes for Erdogan. This was the AKP's core incentive and it has apparently become obsolete because many Kurds voted for the HDP in June. Erdogan's team rules according to the slogan: If you aren't with us, you are against us. This zero-sum idea of politics is a disaster. It has polarised Turkish politics for years.

Erdogan is driven by the idea to become the greatest leader of all times, greater even than Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who founded the republic. At the same time, he is terrified of losing power and having to face the courts for his shenanigans, should his opponents form the government.

Distrust is growing among the people. They remember the year of violence in the 1990s, when ten thousands died in a PKK insurgency. As this e-paper was finalised all opinion polls indicated that the election results in November will not be different from the ones in June. Angry anti-HDP propaganda has failed to make a dent. Apart from an absolute AKP majority, the greatest danger for Turkey would be a coalition of the AKP with the ultra-nationalist MHP, since this party is sure to further fan the flames of anti-Kurdish sentiments. The only way to restore peace to this troubled country is a coalition of the AKP with the CHP. Politicians must make peace their top priority – rather than trying to win 400 seats in parliament.

Rössler/picture-alliance/dpa

Kurds rallying in favour of the peace process in Frankfurt earlier this year.

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Huge infrastructure projects can gain acceptance from local communities as an example of a solar power plant in Morocco shows. **Page 41**

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